Yegor YAKOVLEV

The BEGINNING

The Story About
the ULYANOV Family,
LENIN's
Childhood and Youth

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Voices from the past

Once again—about Lenin.

About Lenin again? So much has already been written and published about him, so many films and plays have already been produced about him! Krupskaya's warning still rings in our ears: "Loud praise and exaggerated homage paid to any figure in the revolutionary movement always made Vladimir Ilyich comment: "He's being turned into an icon...."[1]

Can we say anything new on this theme today in addition to what has already been said by eyewitnesses and writers, academics, journalists and local historians—by all those who have already turned their attention to this subject?

The situation was very different in the spring of 1917. Soldiers from the 8th Mounted Artillery Battery wondered who Lenin was: they had virtually no idea. Vladimir Ilyich had only recently returned from abroad where he lived as a political émigré. His name was appearing in all the newspapers and the tone in which Lenin was described made it immediately obvious what the political complexion of any publication was. The artillery-

men were later to write to Petrograd from the front with the following request: "In view of the fact that there is much friction over Lenin among the soldiers of the battery, please let us have the earliest possible reply. What is his origin? Where had he been? If he had been exiled, what for?"[2]

It was in answer to this question from the soldiers that Lenin was to write the first and only lines he ever devoted to an account of his own life.

"My name is Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov.

"I was born in Simbirsk on April 10, 1870."[3] Lenin was prepared to answer all the questions contained in the soldiers' letter apart from the last one: "What is he doing at present, that is, are his acts doing us good or harm?"[4] Lenin was of the opinion that it was for the soldiers themselves to answer that question, "because it is for you to judge whether or not my activity is doing you any good".[5]

Indeed even after the victory of the October Revolution, Lenin was by no means a familiar figure to everyone. Krupskaya recalled: "Towards evening when dusk was falling I would come home from work and, if Lenin was not busy, we would take a stroll together near the Smolny Institute, talking as we went. Those days there were few people who recognised Ilyich by sight and he used to walk about without any kind of bodyguard at all."[6]

A few months later the Soviet Government moved to Moscow. The very first day after his arrival Lenin was arrested in Manezhnaya

Square right in the centre of the city. One of the headlines at the time in *Krasnaya Gazeta* (Red Newspaper) was COMRADE LENIN ARRESTED. This is what had happened. "Late in the night of March 12th a patrol of Red Army soldiers under the command of the commissar for the Gorodskoy (City) District stopped a passing car. To make sure the command was obeyed, some man in the patrol fired a few shots into the air. One of the passengers announced that he was Lenin, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars. The district commissar declared that he did not know Lenin personally and instructed that the man he had arrested come with him to the building of the former Assembly of the Nobility[7] for identification. There the misunderstanding was soon cleared up...."[8] For us today such an incident seems virtually incredible but at that time things were very different. Krupskaya was to write in connection with those early years in Moscow: "Those days there were very few people who recognised Lenin when they saw him: when he used to walk down the streets no one used to pay any attention to him."[9]

On his first day in Moscow Lenin had crossed the threshold of the Assembly of the Nobility escorted by Red Army soldiers. Forty-eight hours later when the Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets[10] began, a reporter was to write in a passage that was not so much addressed to his readers but rather to provide an outlet for his own attempt to capture Lenin's personality: "This man with the ginger beard and shrewd eyes

standing out there on the platform, with one hand in his pocket, appears to be in his element in the middle of the crowd. This is the secret of his strength. Martov, Chicherin, and Pokrovsky[11] are good, interesting and intelligent men, but they stand apart from the crowd. They are never part of it. Yet Lenin, even when up on the platform, is part of the crowd. What is more, the crowd is aware of this too. Lenin does not ask anything of his audience or try and persuade the people before him ... he thinks aloud and convinces them. He is sure that the people in the crowd will be on his side because he is on theirs."[12]

Six years later into the very same building—where the Assembly of the Nobility had convened—there came streaming the whole of Moscow, people from every part of the country to say good-bye to Lenin. That was to be the scene in 1924.

Nowadays questions like those asked by men from the mounted artillery battery (Who is this Lenin?) appear astonishing to say the least. Stop for a moment and ask yourself whether you have ever come across anyone who had not heard of Lenin. I, for one, have not...

The next question to ask is how best to approach a story about the Ulyanov family—one of hundreds of other stories—about life in Simbirsk, where Lenin spent the first eighteen years of his life, how best to address the reader who already knows so much about Lenin's childhood and early years.

Perhaps the best thing to do first of all is

to talk to and seek advice from those who were side by side with Lenin as he followed that long and difficult path leading to the revolution. I was once told how one of the delegates to the Eighth Congress of Soviets—the one which adopted the GOELRO[13] Plan in the winter of 1920—made the following notes: "If fifty years from now, any one of those here present is still alive, let him tell his grandchildren about this Congress and the people who fought, lived and strove so hard to build in those great years of the Revolution."[14] Their stories and reminiscences, their thoughts and ideas are to be found nowadays on pages that have turned brittle with time, pages from the journals of the 1920s: *Katorga i Ssylka* (Penal Servitude and Exile), *Proletarskaya revolyutsiya* (Proletarian Revolution), *Krasny Arkhiv* (Red Archives).... What an unusual ring the titles of the various sections in the journals have for us today—titles such as "Heroes and Martyrs of the Russian Revolution".... Voices from the past!

Their reminiscences are so spontaneous and immediate in their impact that it is as if we can see and hear these people before us—the brave men who fought against public executions in tsarist Russia. They conjure up for us pictures of rows of soldiers shooting into the crowds, of Cossack whips lashing at students' faces, of those who survived the grim horrors of the Peter and Paul Fortress[15] and the fear of being buried alive in Schlüsselburg[16] or the nerve-wracking loneliness of exile or the cursed life of the political émigré. Let us try to think back to the days in the

1920s, to those special gatherings held in the building belonging to the All-Union Society of Former Political Convicts and Exiles—functions that would be attended for the most part by men who were far from old. Or let us cast our minds back to the editorial offices of the journal *Proletarskaya Revolyutsiya* (Proletarian Revolution), where the heroes of that same revolution assembled one autumn evening on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the October Revolution—to talk about things that had happened very recently, about the armed uprising in Petrograd.... Let us imagine just such a meeting—conversations with those who knew Vladimir Ilyich. Let us listen to those voices from the past.

Lidia Fotieva,[17] secretary of the Council of People's Commissars, was to recall: "Vladimir Ilyich's personality had many facets and such enormous significance, that a true portrait of him could only be created by dint of common endeavour, with people who had known him well working collectively, putting in ever new strokes and new details descriptive of his appearance, his life and his activity."

This collective effort has to a large extent been completed. Countless reminiscences have been handed down to us: the most detailed are those written by Nadezhda Krupskaya and Vladimir Ulyanov's relatives, his closest associates and even the stories told by those who met Lenin on one single occasion, and who had just a fleeting encounter with him. All those eyewitness accounts are of priceless sig-

nificance, never, alas, to be repeated.

Panteleimon Lepeshinsky,[18] who had been side by side with Lenin during his exile in Siberia, urged people to do everything possible to avoid losing a genuine, life-like image of Lenin. At the same time he warned against letting his fascinating personality fade with time or become drowned in a sea of legends, which are bound to grow up around his name....

Lepeshinsky was right: it was not long before the legends did start to grow up. A few years later, when Krupskaya was returning a manuscript that had been sent to her for her comments by the editorial board of the newspaper *Leninskiye Iskry* (Leninist Sparks) she pointed out: "I am totally opposed to any sort of fairy-tales about Lenin, I see them as a failure to respect his memory."[19]

What is it that gives rise to legends, that sows the seeds of legends? Legends, as a rule, start out from facts, but are out of tune with modern ideas and attitudes. Legends are stories that have become common knowledge and the common knowledge is more often than not that which has been investigated least of all.

In this connection Lenin himself often used to recall the French proverb: "Faults are sometimes the continuation of our merits."[20]

We hear about Lenin from our early school-days onwards, sometimes even while still at kindergarten; we read about him as soon as we have mastered the alphabet. Lenin's genius, his courage, his strong will, his high principles and modesty—all this took

shape in the course of the revolutionary movement in Russia. Yet conclusions of this sort, we know only too well, are the fruit of independent reflection. That path is one which each man has to tread for himself, if he wants to form his own convictions. Repeating the commonplace, on the other hand, gives rise to the feeling that everything worthy of note has long since been read, discovered and exhaustively investigated. Our consciousness then seems to "acquire a growth of crust". That phrase was one Marietta Shaginyan used.[21] Even she, a woman who had personally witnessed Lenin at work, suddenly broke off her work on her book about the revolutionary leader to ask herself anxiously what happened to her when she began to perceive of Lenin as "a person *beyond* and *above* the human, one not to be compared with anyone else...".[22] The writer happened to be re-reading a speech of Gorky made on the occasion of Lenin's fiftieth birthday and was taken aback by it: Gorky referred to Columbus, comparing the great discoverer of new lands with the discoverer of social truths—Lenin. It seemed a heresy to her: "It was the comparison of Lenin—Lenin!—with Christopher Columbus...."[23] For a long time she could not overcome the indignation she felt in relation to Gorky. Perhaps Shaginyan might never have been able to, if she had not once happened to speak to a revolutionary woman who had known Lenin well. When the woman had heard about the comparison drawn by Gorky she had burst out laughing and commented: "And Gorky, well a major writer, he

let himself soar, got swept off his feet—it's always happening to him. Christopher Columbus! what a thing to say."[24] The woman Shaginyan had been talking to—a person who could still remember Lenin in real life—reacted in quite the opposite way to the comparison. To her it was a comical exaggeration, a hyperbole, a sweeping statement. Shaginyan then asked herself another anxious question: "What has come over me, an octogenarian, to make me so insensible to life's texture as to consider what was only natural a heresy and even revive the notion of the 'heretical'? Was I seeking refuge in the conventional, helping to create a myth, mythicising actual life? '*A crust*, that's what it is!' I said to myself in a high-sounding voice, feeling it necessary to utter the thought aloud."[25]

Those who worked with Lenin recall that he could not endure drawn curtains and that he never let the window curtains in his study be drawn, as if they cut him off from the world outside and that was something he could not bear... The urge to "draw back the curtains" is one that we too can experience when we long to look back without obstruction from the present into the past and to see and hear Lenin for ourselves. It is the urge to form our own picture of Lenin's character and personality, drawn from the decisions he took, his actions and even his spontaneous reactions to each phenomenon in the world around him—to see Lenin not just in the light of all that he accomplished, but on the path to his goals, to glimpse the details and fine shadings of that life. We must try and see Le-

nin as he really was—without preconceptions. That was what Krupskaya advocated: "I am against all romanticising that distorts reality.... What is still worse and quite unacceptable is to invent things that never existed, that bear no relation to the truth, to place in Lenin's mouth words that he never said, to refer to famous figures with names other than their own and also to distort their characters."[26]

...I myself imagined what might happen, what kind of controversies this might lead to. Yet voices from the past rang out, and it is more than human nature can stand: you stretch out your hand, ask for the floor—you want to speak out and ask questions. It is not history that has tired out the reader or me, but the endless words churned out on the fringe of history. Readers like myself have grown tired of the fences of exclamation marks and the piles of superlatives that we have to push our way through to get to the facts hidden underneath.

There is nothing more instructive than history, it was and remains a teacher of the first order for all generations. It must have been along these lines that Marx and Engels were thinking when they wrote: "We know only a single science, the science of history."[27] This science will not tolerate endless rapturous exclamations blotting out all other sounds from the past. Without them, some people seem to think, history becomes more instructive and more convenient as a source of examples—in a word it becomes better than it was in reality. As a result real conflicts are replaced, diluted and distorted. The same thing also hap-

pens to the individuals involved in those conflicts.

What we should all do is to read and reread every page of the works Lenin wrote, and the related documents and reminiscences!

Krupskaya observed to her readers: "I advise you to study Lenin's works, to read them all volume by volume (mainly those covering the Soviet period) and then it will be easier for you to imagine the kind of man he was."[28] To ponder on the past, from the vantage point of the present and dwell on what appears striking today; not to fear reproaches, if you did not phrase things in the accepted way or make the customary comments, thus avoiding the banality of the well known....

Anatoly Lunacharsky pointed out in connection with Lenin: "The details of Lenin's life, the private side of it are also of tremendous importance for humankind."[29]

These details, the private side, can be in large measure traced back to Lenin's childhood, to Simbirsk, to his family. His self-respect and his respect for those around him.... His readiness to learn from the experience of earlier generations and then to elaborate that legacy. His ability to choose his path in life.... It is to those early years that we can look to find that experience, those universal human values which do not change from one generation to the next.

Lenin used to comment that "...time is working on our side".[30] It is indeed time that brings us nearer to Lenin. Our path of development is advancing from faith to knowledge, from axioms to theorems, from admira-

tion for Lenin to an understanding of what he achieved.

"Lenin could not have become the man he was if he had lived in a different age, rather than in the age of proletarian revolution,"[31] Nadezhda Krupskaya reminds us. In keeping with those words and as a continuation of that idea we come to realise that "if he had lived in a different age" Vladimir Ulyanov would nevertheless have been a vehicle for that incalculable treasure-house of ideas that the Russian intelligentsia had amassed by then. The converse is also true: Lenin could not have become the leader of a socialist revolution if he had not absorbed those enlightened ideas, the thirst for freedom and the spirit of self-sacrifice which had grown up within the Russian revolutionary democratic intelligentsia from the moment it first appeared on the historical stage....

Nowadays when those epoch-making circumstances belong to the past and several decades separate us from them, in an age when each one of us is free to take up the work of his choice and his path through life, the example of Lenin the man is all the more indispensable for us, the example of a man who succeeded in building his own life in perfect accord with what he held to be worthy and right. Having done that he succeeded during his own life-time—not at some time in the future—in accomplishing what many generations of Russian revolutionaries had merely dreamed about.

For us in the 1980s when we devote so much energy to the upbringing of children,

now that we have both the time and the opportunities to do so, it is crucially important, more than at any time before, to have the clearest concepts of genuine moral values that it is really worth passing on to those who come after us.

"An atmosphere of mutual trust, love and respect for the freedom of other people reigned in the Ulyanov household," recalls Panteleimon Lepeshinsky. "There were no arguments about everyday matters of a trivial kind, no scraps, so common in narrow-minded circles, no competing for personal possessions. In this respect the Ulyanov family represented a true aristocracy of the spirit, and Vladimir Ilyich was to retain for the rest of his life that fastidious approach to the people around him, that horror of quarrels stemming from narrow-minded pretensions, and that true nobility of spirit in the basic fundamental sense of that word...."[32]

We are keen to find out from the vantage point of the present, when all of us have so much and through hard work can attain still more, what lay at the heart of the modest lifestyle of the Ulyanov family, of Vladimir Ilyich himself, and to understand that modest simplicity. That simplicity that was not in any way ostentatious, nor dictated by poverty or miserliness, but rather by a deliberate striving after riches of the non-material kind, those that are truly worthy of man.

"Vladimir Ilyich was not an ascetic: he loved life with all its many gifts," recalls the veteran Bolshevik Maria Essen,[33] "but external details, food, clothes and such other

things were of no importance to him. It was not a question of hardship, or deliberate renunciation of material things, but Lenin simply felt no need of these things. I cannot remember him ever talking about tasty food, even in jest, or ever attaching importance to dress. They drank, ate and dressed of course, but that side of life was never the object of serious attention."[34]

Many people have written about Vladimir Ilyich, but by far the most successful accounts of him have been those from Gorky's pen.[35] What Alexei Maximovich wrote about Lenin is of course by far the most interesting writing of its kind. People take this for granted and this is why we do not usually ask ourselves: What accounts for Gorky's success? Was it just a question of talent? Yes, but there was more to it than that. Gorky knew Lenin well and had had the opportunity to observe him over many years. Yes, but there was more to it than that.

Alexei Maximovich was a friend of Lenin's and their relations were those of equals. "I held him in affection and still do. The affection was mixed with anger at times. I used to speak to him harshly, with no holds barred. I could talk to him as I could talk to no one else," Gorky would have declared, if he could have joined in our discussion.

This explains why the writer expressed himself so freely, using phrases like: struts about—this great child of our cursed world—struck a pose that was strange and slightly comic, a pose in which there was something surprisingly touching and amusing, a mixture

of the great victor and proud rooster.[36]

For every generation—from Gorky's down to our own, whoever turns to the figure of Lenin—does well to turn to that plumb-line provided by Krupskaya's words: "I have a strange feeling as I write these memoirs. On the one hand it seems to me that I ought to tell the workers and young people what I remember about Ilyich, but sometimes I cannot get away from the feeling that Ilyich might be unhappy with my memoirs, since he used to talk so little about himself."[37]

Once again—for the umpteenth time!—I turn to those words written by Nadezhda Krupskaya so many years ago. I try to capture a similar mood, and set myself the same high standards. Then at last I can, and feel entitled to turn once more to the theme of LENIN.

I Call Upon the Living

In the autumn of 1869 Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov—a thirty-eight-year-old collegiate councillor—left Nizhni Novgorod[38] for Simbirsk.[39] He travelled with his wife Maria and their five-year-old daughter Anna and three-year-old son Alexander. Six months later another son, Vladimir, was born.

The moorings on the river in Nizhni Novgorod faded into the distance, the last little houses on the outskirts of the town disappeared from view and after that river banks stretched as far as the eye could see, banks that were covered by woods starting to lose their leaves to the first autumn winds. The wheels were turning and the paddles slapping against the surface, just as if some playful boys were slapping their hands against the water.

For fourteen years Ilya Nikolayevich had worked as a teacher in Penza and Nizhni Novgorod and now he was an Inspector of Elementary Schools—to give him his newly accorded title in full. He had been recommended for the post by his former teacher, Alexander Vasilyevich Timofeyev—a teacher of literature who had won the hearts of his

pupils at the Gymnasium (secondary school) in Astrakhan. He had since become Inspector for the whole of the Kazan Educational District. If Ulyanov had not kept in touch with Timofeyev while working in Penza and Nizhni Novgorod, and if Timofeyev had not been given the post in the Kazan Educational District it is more than likely that Ilya Nikolayevich would never have been appointed to his post in Simbirsk. Then that chain of associations that is rooted so deep in our memory—the Ulyanov family, Simbirsk, Ulyanovsk—would simply never have existed.

Ilya Nikolayevich was full of enthusiasm and eager to start working. Inspector of Elementary Schools! The education of peasant children in the whole province would now depend on his diligence and tenacity, as would the numbers of those who would be taught to read, write and count, who would be lifted up out of the dark depths of ignorance. As the years passed—and there would be a good number of those—Vladimir Ulyanov would note that "the office of inspector of elementary schools was established for the purpose of taking the effective management of elementary education out of the hands of the Zemstvos[40]".[41]

With time much becomes clearer. With time... But in the autumn of 1869 while on the way to his new place of work Ilya Nikolayevich was dreaming of only one thing: to work, to work and to work! He hoped, no, he was absolutely sure that even holding a governmental post one can do good, be helpful for people and act for the benefit of progress.

It was long ago. Not even ten years had passed since the abolition of serfdom.[42] To imagine those times, complete with all their everyday details is more than likely a feat beyond our reach. For Ilya Nikolayevich, for his contemporaries the days of Nicholas I[43] reign had seemed to stretch in an endless chain—would they ever come to an end?! When rulers begin to think of themselves as immortal, then life itself seems to stand still. As for the abolition of serfdom—it was simply an inconceivable future—for Ilya Nikolayevich it had been an incredible yet real event, unlike anything he had ever experienced before. Thirty years of his life—more than half—had passed before serfdom was abolished.

Documents and Eyewitnesses Testify

AGAINST ALL ODDS...

1831

THIRTY YEARS STILL REMAINED BEFORE SERFDOM WOULD BE ABOLISHED

Tsar Nicholas I made it known that he wished that "no serf children should be admitted to institutions where they might receive an education superior to what their status required...".[44]

From the Parish Register in the Church of St. Nicholas in Astrakhan: On July 19, 1831, Archpriest Nikolai Livanov baptised the second son of Nikolai Ulyanov—a former serf.

On the nineteenth day ... [was baptised] Ilya, son of Nikolai—the son of Vasily Ulyanin, a member of the lower middle class in the town of Astrakhan, and his lawfully wedded wife, Anna the daughter of Alexei.

Anna Ulyanova:

Ilya Nikolayevich had only vague memories of his father.... There had been little money to go round, even when his father had still been alive. One of Ilya Nikolayevich's earliest memories was the following incident. He was sent one evening to the shop to buy five kopecks' worth of tea. He had been given a ten-kopeck coin. On his way home with his purchase clutched in one hand and his change in the other, the boy had got stuck in the mud and so thoroughly that he had not been able to scramble out without using his hands: still clenching his dirty little fists he had stood for a long time outside the front door, hesitating to go in, fearful that his father might give him a good hiding on account of the way he looked, when he handed over the purchase and the change.[4 5]

1850

ELEVEN YEARS STILL REMAINED BEFORE SERFDOM WOULD BE ABOLISHED

Tsar Nicholas I announces to the deputies of the St. Petersburg nobility:

...all land without exception should belong to landowners of noble birth. This right is

sacrosanct and should never be infringed by anyone.[46]

Nadezhda Krupskaya:

...Only thanks to the help from his older brother, who contributed his very last kopecks to his education, and thanks to his rare talent and determined labours did Ilya Nikolayevich succeed in making his mark and completing his education in the local gymnasium....[47]

A. P. Aristov, Headmaster of the Astrakhan Gymnasium to the Counsellor of the Kazan Educational District, June 10, 1850:

...I have the honour to report to your Excellency that four of the pupils at the gymnasium under my jurisdiction have successfully completed their course of study....

...I respectfully request your permission to present to the said pupils from the gymnasium certificates testifying to their successful completion of the full course of study at the gymnasium and to confer upon Ulyanov a silver medal and the title of *honorary citizen*....

With regard to the wish expressed by the pupil *Ilya Ulyanov* to study at Kazan University which comes under your Excellency's jurisdiction, and at public expense, a matter which I had the honour to expound to you on the thirty-first day of May last ... I feel I must recommend this pupil, Ulyanov, to your Excellency on account of his excellent moral attitudes and his behaviour which has recommended itself to us in this respect during the

whole of his course of study at the gymnasium.[48]

Maria Ulyanova:

...In the certificate presented to Ilya Nikolayevich on his graduation from the gymnasium it was pointed out that "Ulyanov, in view of his origins from an estate liable to pay taxes, is not entitled under any circumstances to enter civil service". These "origins" made it difficult for him to receive a grant to study at the University. In response to his petition to the effect that Ulyanov might be awarded a grant, as a "gifted pupil" without any independent means, in order that he might continue his education, the director of the Astrakhan Gymnasium received a reply from the Counsellor of the Kazan Educational District pointing out that grants were designed "to help only civil servants educate their children, and that there were insufficient grounds for allowing Ulyanov to join the ranks of grant-holders since he belonged to the lower middle class."[49]

Application from Ilya Ulyanov for a place at Kazan University, August 5, 1850:

Anxious as I am to complete my education by pursuing a full course of study at the Faculty of Mathematics of the Imperial Kazan University, I make so bold as to trouble your Excellency with a most humble request, that I might be admitted as a student with no governmental grant to the said university, provided of course that I pass the statutory entrance exam.

N. P. Zagoskin, Professor at Kazan University:

Life for a Kazan student in the forties and fifties was a stormy one.... Leaving aside the Homeric drinking-bouts and revels, which assumed a chronic character.... There were of course exemplary students from among the sons of aristocratic families who turned their backs on the wild debauchery of the old-time Kazan *Bursches* and set up their own group, but then resorted to the opposite extreme, becoming carried away with high life, delights of a more subtle and fitting kind, quite *comme il faut*... Balls, parties, picnics, plays, trotting races and women constituted the be-all and end-all of those self-satisfied young gentlemen... There existed at the same time, of course, a third group of students that belonged neither to the "revellers" nor to the "aristocrats". That was a group of young men, who came to this temple of science provided by the University for the sake of science itself and who conscientiously visited the lecture halls and patiently pored over various integrals.... However that group constituted—and this must be acknowledged—a very small contingent of hard-workers, who were not in a position to lend any colour whatsoever to student life in Kazan during the forties and fifties.[50]

Degree conferred upon Ilya Ulyanov by the Board of Kazan University on December 13, 1854:

The Imperial University of Kazan testifies that the student *Ilya*, son of *Nikolai, Ulyanov*,

from the lower middle class, ... has demonstrated his knowledge with completely satisfactory answers in his public examinations. He presented a written discourse on his chosen subject: "The Olbers method and its application for determining the orbit of the Klinkerfues Comet", which has been approved by the Faculty. In view of the above and in keeping with the regulations of the Faculty and the University Council on November 18, 1854 Ulyanov has been duly confirmed as a Candidate in Mathematical Sciences, by the Faculty of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, with all attendant rights and privileges....

1855

SIX YEARS STILL REMAINED BEFORE SERFDOM WOULD BE ABOLISHED

Alexander II[5 1] *in his Accession Manifesto*:

We declare unto all our loyal subjects that our Lord God, in his inscrutable wisdom, has seen fit to deal us all an unexpected and most terrible blow. Our beloved parent and Lord Emperor Nikolai Pavlovich, after a short but grave illness, that advanced in recent years with incredible speed, has passed away on this eighteenth day of February....

Alexander II to the Governor-General of Moscow in response to an inquiry made by the gentry, 1856:

It has been brought to our attention, gentlemen, that rumours have spread amongst

you to the effect that we intend to abolish serfdom. So as to prevent any groundless assumptions being made on this most weighty of subjects, we consider it necessary to announce to you that we do not intend to take this step now. Yet, you yourselves, gentlemen, of course, know that the existing practice of the ownership of serfs cannot remain unchanged. It is better to change serfdom from above, than to wait for such time as it should begin to change itself from below. We beg you, gentlemen, to lend thought to the question as to how this step might best be implemented. Make sure to convey these words of ours to the gentry for their consideration.[52]

Alexander Herzen:[53]

We shall not see a free Russia. All our work consists in breaking down obstacles and clearing the way. We shall die on the doorstep, and not because there are gendarmes at the entrance to the mansion, but because in our veins there seethes the blood of our forefathers—lashed by the whip and beaten with cudgels, that of Peter's and Biron's[54] informers, our executioner forebears, such as Arakcheyev and Magnitsky,[55] of our fathers who condemned the Decembrists,[56] who condemned Poland,[57] who served in the Third Department,[58] who flogged soldiers and peasants to death. It stems from the fact that in the veins of our leaders and our powerful newspaper proprietors there curdles that very same blood acquired by their forefathers in ante-rooms, assembly rooms and offices.[59]

The Assistant to the Counsellor of the Kazan Educational District N. I. Lobachevsky, to the Headmaster of the Penza Institute for the Sons of the Nobility, May 31, 1855:

Ilya Ulyanov, holder of a Candidate's Degree from Kazan University has received from the office of the Counsellor an order for post-horses for his official journey and subsequently set off to take up his new post on the twenty-eighth day of May.

Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin:[60]

There is only one thing to be said about Penza: it deserves no praise. It is such a trite, repulsive little town that I feel sick at the mere thought that I might have to spend a long time there.[61]

* * *

In 1855 Ilya Nikolayevich said good-bye to Kazan University. That same year in his *Ode to the Death of Nicholas I* Nikolai Dobrolyubov[62] had written:

Following Nature's immutable laws
Events shall pursue their normal course;
One tyrant dies, the next takes up the crown,
Tyranny again will hold the country down.

After receiving an order for "two horses and a guide", Ulyanov set off for Penza. It was at approximately the same time that Saltykov-Shchedrin, whose view of that town was far from favourable, drew the following

conclusions with regard to the fate of a young man living in the province: "The position of a young man abandoned in the province is truly deserving of pity! Gradually and without noticing what is happening, he becomes drawn into the slime of triviality, and captivated by the undemanding ease of that life which has no past, no future, he turns into one of its quiet champions. Then Mother Sloth creeps up on him and clasps the new victim so tightly in her embrace that he has no chance to escape. You look around and think to yourself: 'people are getting on with their lives here, and happy lives at that'—then you too start to derive happiness from that life."[63]

Is the writer being fair, however, when he makes such sweeping generalisations about the future that awaits a young man in the province, prophesying as he does that the idiocy of that banality is bound to win the day? If we take Ilya Nikolayevich who spent his whole life in the province, that superficial existence "which has no past, no future" would have been something quite alien to him, let alone "Mother Sloth". Saltykov-Shchedrin is right and fair in his criticisms: he writes of the life which inevitably stems from the nature of everyday life in the Russian provinces, where the rights of the Empire's subjects are non-existent. The unshakeable pattern of that life makes indifference and ignorance take ever firmer root. Ulyanov on the other hand was a man who lived, studied, worked, dreamt and went on working despite all the odds. Of course he was not

alone in this resolve, yet men like him were an exception to the rule.

It is a well-known fact that man tends to stand up to his environment: his character is shaped by actions undertaken in an effort to defy commonplace routine and criticism or generally accepted norms of behaviour. This can be seen to apply to all ages: all that changes are the points of reference and the direction of this continued resistance. The years go by and the past, complete with all its attendant problems retreats further and further into the background—so far that sometimes it leads us to wring our hands in helpless despair: many a weapon has been broken in these confrontations and some men have experienced the need to defend themselves in this kind of situation....

In our life today there is a great deal that we owe to.... Secondary schools—we owe to the introduction of universal compulsory education. We can enter universities thanks to the expansion of higher education. We do not experience any major difficulties when we seek to find work: new blood is needed everywhere. We are free to choose for ourselves any path in life thanks to the fact that we are not subject to any social barriers and restrictions.... "Ulyanov, in view of his origins from an estate liable to pay taxes, is not entitled under any circumstances to enter civil service." Who could imagine today such a comment appearing in a school-leaver's certificate or diploma. Yet Ilya Nikolayevich, as we already know, graduated from the gymnasium with a silver medal. What is more, in the his-

tory of the Astrakhan Gynmasium that was the first such medal for almost fifty years.

To keep to one's chosen path in a society which rejects all you aspire to (even though you know that to be useful, worthy of respect and noble)—not only achieving something creative but quite simply living in such a society is very difficult.

Entry to the gymnasium for the son of a peasant with no rights at all, almost twenty years before serfdom in Russia was wiped out forever was a rare event, almost unique. To dream of going to the university after the gymnasium was an even bolder dream, the "forbidden fruit" indeed.

When Ulyanov was enrolled at Kazan University, Prince Shirinsky-Shakhmatov had been appointed Minister for Education. He was known for his piety and superstition. When it came to matters of education he was unyielding. He warned: "Persons of low estate, lifted out of their natural environment through university education, and who for the most part do not possess any immovable property, but who dream too much about their abilities and knowledge are far more likely to turn into men with a restless, discontented spirit."

At that very same time, in 1850, an instruction was issued virtually denying university places to the sons of peasants, members of the lower middle class, soldiers, emancipated serfs, Jews and foreigners.... By the way, thirty-seven years later Ilya Nikolayevich's son, Vladimir Ulyanov, took part in a student gathering at that very same university. The

reason for the gathering was the so-called Circular on Cooks' Children. The Minister for Education, by then Delyanov, decided to free the gymnasiums of the trouble of being "attended by the children of coachmen, footmen, cooks, laundresses, small shopkeepers and the like". In the Circular it was pointed out that "these children ought not to be taken out of the milieu to which they belong", since this would lead, "as many years' experience had shown, to their discontent with the conditions of life, to their bitterness in relation to the existing order and all that had to be accepted in accordance with the very nature of things, and in relation to the inequality of property relations".[64] Delyanov, forty years after Shirinsky-Shakhmatov, had borrowed his "many years' experience".

Not only had Ilya Nikolayevich been refused a place with a government grant, but had only been accepted as a student with no governmental grant with the greatest difficulty, although the Council of Kazan University had singled him out as a student who "without doubt had satisfied all requirements". It had been necessary for him to present a document from the lower-middle class community, guaranteeing that it would take upon itself an obligation to pay taxes and exercise military service for Ilya Ulyanov. The documents which Ilya Nikolayevich produced from the Astrakhan Town Council, were not accepted by the University. A correspondence between Astrakhan and Kazan on these matters lasted for months. For almost the whole of his first year Ulyanov was referred to as a

student with conditional acceptance. In the years that followed he was obliged regularly to produce his permit "to live freely within Kazan". Vasily Nikolayevich Ulyanov was paying taxes for his younger brother during all those years of study. What was more, he had taken upon himself an obligation to compensate for his younger brother's military service "in kind", which meant in other words that he might be called up as a soldier.

In a country where it was so difficult to acquire an education, it was no easier to serve the cause of education either. In Penza and Nizhni Novgorod the dedicated teacher Ulyanov more often than not would find himself going against traditions and established views. This was particularly so in Simbirsk, where he was opening schools for peasant children. And so it was going on, year after year, despite all the odds.

This ability not to be swallowed up by trivial everyday concerns and to stand up to that temptation, an ability which had been moulded by life itself, was to become one of the moral characteristics which was to distinguish the whole way of life of the Ulyanov family. Anna Ulyanova wrote, when recalling her youth: "Various novels that our fellow pupils were reading with great enthusiasm began to appear dull and trivial to us."[65] With reference to the years they spent abroad Nadezhda Krupskaya recalled that Lenin organised his whole way of life very differently from the majority of other émigrés: "People from that walk of life used to love endless conversations, chatting over glasses of tea, through a

haze of smoke."[66]

Particularly well-known was Lenin's ability to stand up against any authorities whatever, when he decided on a course of action, keeping solely to his own convictions. During the famine in Samara, when he was just twenty-one, Lenin stood up and attacked the charitable work being carried out amidst much praise at the time, demonstrating to his audience, with hardly any support whatever, that to save the starving required freeing them from the social order in which disastrous harvests were the rule and good ones chance exceptions.... Several times later on he would feel obliged to say, write and declare that he would prefer to remain in the minority....[67] And he would not fear to say that as a young man, in his fervent attacks against figures of authority from the Narodism (Populist movement).[68] It was with equal zeal that Lenin was to defend the idea that the imperialist war should give way to a civil one twenty years later, when he was already over forty. He was to say once again that it would be better for him to remain in the minority, when he was delivering the April Theses.[69] He stood firm against the current, determined to demonstrate the vital need for the Brest Peace.[70] In the spring of 1918 when it seemed to many people that communism was only just round the corner, he was to declare: "Even the more developed generation of the immediate future will hardly achieve the complete transition to socialism."[71]

Once again he thought it would be better

for him to remain in the minority, and he would emerge victorious in the end.

HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS

The wheels were turning and the paddles slapping against the surface, just as if some playful boys were slapping their hands against the water. The steamer was moving further and further away down the Volga. Heavy clouds hanged low in the sky. A glimpse of the sun could be seen through a gap in them, as it peered down like a feverish eye. On the water and the banks everything shone and sparkled in the shimmering light. Yet the caressing warmth of summer was a thing of the past—it was over and gone for good. The air had a cold, hard gleam about it. No one and nothing were warmed by the sun's rays any more—it merely lightened up the occasional moment during the relentless advance towards winter.

On the way to Simbirsk to take up his new post Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov was thinking about what lay ahead: Inspector of Elementary Schools—that was work of a high-principled kind. Whoever took it on was the person who determined its essential nature. No one would be standing in his way as he freed men and women from the darkness of ignorance, educated their children, tried to help ordinary people, and worked in the interests of fellow citizens...

Instead of the chains with which
serfdom could bind

New ones have been found of a different kind.
But it's easier now for the people to break them,
So, Muse, give a right ringing welcome to freedom![72]

Give a right ringing welcome to freedom! Later Ilya Nikolayevich's son Vladimir was to remark: "...The autocracy is an autocracy precisely because it prohibits and persecutes *all* 'development' towards freedom."[73] These were some of the words Lenin used as he exposed the historical essence of the tsarist regime. They were not, however, to be written until forty years later.

Yet Ilya Nikolayevich still had vivid memories of the era of Nicholas. "Those difficult times had to be lived through for anyone to appreciate the tremendous relief, when after the death of Nicholas I and the accession of his son Alexander II the era of reforms began for Russia,"[74] wrote Anna Ulyanova. When the finest years of a man's life have been swallowed up in decades of stagnation, then he is ready without a moment's hesitation to welcome any movement on the surface of the pool, even a mere ripple. The life of Ilya Nikolayevich and his contemporaries consisted of two quite separate halves, as it were—the years under Nicholas I and those that came afterwards.

News that the Emperor, or as he came to be known later, the "iron tyrant", had died reached Ilya Nikolayevich before he set off for Penza. It had taken a long time for the

news to get as far as Kazan. Nikolai died on Friday, February 18th and not a word was mentioned on the subject in the Monday issue of the *Kazanskiye Gubernskiye Vedomosti* (Kazan Gubernia Recorder). That newspaper only came out once a week and the following issue—dated February 28th—was rimmed with black in mourning for the Emperor. Yet even in that issue no mention was made of the deceased Emperor, since by then it was assumed that the readers would have heard the news from other sources.... If the ruler of the land constantly holds down the printed word, no proper announcement of his demise is to be found in print.

In St. Petersburg and Moscow--by then there was a telegraph communication between Moscow and the capital--on the morning of the second day after the death of Nicholas I everyone was still eagerly praying for his welfare and a bulletin was published on the state of the Tsar's health. It was not actually made public until midday that he had died.

A boy aged twelve at the time recalled: "When the news spread, terror gripped both our house and those of all the neighbours. We were told that people in the market place were behaving in a very suspicious way and were not only failing to express their regret but on the contrary giving voice to wild and dangerous opinions. Adults were only talking in whispers, and my step-mother kept urging us in French: 'Don't say anything in presence of servants!' The servants in their turn started whispering about 'freedom' which would soon be granted. The landowners were expecting a

peasants' revolt to break out any moment—they felt the times of Pugachev[75] were upon us again. At that time in the streets of St. Petersburg progressive intellectuals hugged each other in delight as they passed on the happy news...." That was how Pyotr Kropotkin[76] was to recall the day many years later—a man who though born a prince was to live his life like a true revolutionary.

Another eyewitness account is that of Professor Sergei Solovyov[77] from Moscow University. At midday on that day he had been walking through the quiet little Arbat bystreets. The professor was thinking about what had happened as he made his way towards the Church of St. Nicholas in Bolshoy Nikola Peskovsky Lane. "These changes in the men reigning over us under the present form of government produced a kind of overwhelming and numbing effect upon us at first: I was not made sad at Nikolai's death, but at the same time I felt uneasy. It was a mixture of anxiety and fear for what might follow: what if things became even worse?! I was like a man who had been led out of prison, and who was pleased to be breathing fresh air again, but wondering nevertheless where he was going to be taken. Perhaps it would merely be to another prison, still worse than the first?" These far from cheerful thoughts were interrupted when the professor encountered a colleague, Professor Timofei Granovsky. Solovyov's first words, instead of a greeting, were: "He's dead!" Granovsky replied: "There's nothing surprising about the fact that he's dead; what is surprising is that

we are still alive."[78]

...Then came a period of reforms—which were immediately, there and then, referred to as great and historic reforms. It is worth pointing out here that the grimmer the past period the more noble and resounding are the names which contemporaries lend to steps taken to counter it. Tyutchev[79] was the first who lit upon a fitting image to describe the state of minds at that time and the wild sweep of their hopes: the thaw. During the winter and the autumn people had been talking of the spring, of their hopes, of the radiant times that lay ahead for Russia. Ulyanov too was to experience all this, the feeling that in your work and plans for the future everything is being reborn, just as when spring follows on from winter: when the dawning of a new season is to be sensed in the fragrant freshness of an unexpected breeze or in the first green of a branch's barely unfurled leaves, and you yourself are ready to be absorbed into this new, young current that holds so much promise....

On February 19, 1861 Alexander II signed the Manifesto on the Abolition of Serfdom. An important step had been taken towards turning the empire into a bourgeois monarchy.... Emancipation had come, come at last: Ilya Nikolayevich rejoiced as the bright day dawned, like a second Easter bestowed upon the people by the Tsar-Liberator.

Men who but yesterday had been serfs with no rights had now become as it was said small cogs in the state machine and the slaves of yesterday would, without fail, become

proper citizens of their country. This was how Ilya Nikolayevich, filled with radiant hope, saw the future.

Enough! Forgotten and paid are the
scores of the past.
Peasants are even with their masters
now.
The people of Russia long to learn how
To be citizens of their land at last.[80]

No! Vladimir Ilyich was to exclaim decades later. "Our peasant Reform, far from manifesting magnanimity of the government, on the contrary, serves as a great historical example of the extent to which the autocratic government befouls everything it touches."[81] In one of his works Lenin was to repeat Tolstoy's remark to the effect that "there's no room to turn a chicken out", remarking that this "humour of the gallows-bird" demonstrated better than any long quotation that the emancipation of the peasants was only freeing them from their land.[82]

Not only had the peasants' slave-like dependence on the landowners come to an end—and this was something which Ilya Nikolayevich definitely welcomed—but Zemstvos had appeared on the scene as well. These signified an introduction of unprecedented representative organisations. With them there also emerged the schools and hospitals that came under the jurisdiction of the Zemstvos. Elective courts were established at the same time.

Once again decades later Ulyanov's son assessed the situation in a very different light.... "The overall result of the whole 'epoch of re-

forms' which marked the 1860s was that the peasants remained poverty-stricken, downtrodden, ignorant, and subject to the feudal landowners in the courts, in the organs of administration, in the schools, and in the Zemstvos."[83]

It is possible despite the passing of time to imagine to ourselves exchange of opinions between people of different generations, even between a father and a son. Yet there cannot be an end to such arguments: only time can settle arguments of this kind. More often than not time makes clear to the majority, what only a few people were able to appreciate initially. It would not be proper, indeed wrong, unjust and fruitless to reproach earlier generations for failing to understand what is clear to us all today, what has become evident thanks to the historical development of society and to the experience amassed by succeeding generations.

Vladimir Ilyich himself was to remark that for educators of the 1840s-1860s—and this included therefore Ilya Nikolayevich—all social questions came down to the struggle against serfdom and its remnants after 1861. Russian educators of the 1860s—including his own father—were, according to Lenin, distinguished by three qualities: first and foremost, their hatred for serfdom and all it gave rise to; second, their ardent championing of education, self-government and freedom; and third, their defence of the interests of the masses, in particular those of the peasants and their conviction that the abolition of serfdom would bring prosperity in its wake and the

desire to work towards that end. People of that generation—that of Ilya Nikolayevich—"sincerely did not see (partly could not yet see) the contradictions in the system which was growing out of serfdom".[84]

...Ilya Nikolayevich was Lenin's father. As we look back into the past we find ourselves coming up with unfair expectations, as if Ulyanov senior should without fail have possessed the most revolutionary views as his son. These expectations stem from the natural urge to chart everything on an upward curve, taking through to its logical conclusion what was just a prologue. Yet Ilya Nikolayevich was a man of his times. Even though his views may not have been those of the most extreme revolutionaries, nevertheless they were in line with the most progressive ideas widespread in Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century. This itself is no mean achievement.

In the course of time and in the heat of disappointment much was to become clear to him: the dreams that he had seen as realities, the timid hopes that he had seen as a part of everyday life. Then during the thaw he had not been alone in welcoming the era of reform that began. Then even the journal *Kolokol* (Bell)[85] with its appeal "I call upon the living"—

I call upon the living,
While the dead I mourn.
Lightnings I split asunder....

—even the rebellious *Kolokol* which had always held up the autocracy to shame, addressed words of gratitude to Alexander II,

for the mere intention of emancipating the peasants. Alexander Herzen wrote in the pages of *Kolokol* in the first issue of 1860: "Light is dawning at last. Tamed by experience, subdued by memories, we hailed the dawn of a new day with profound joy, this dawn that is now breaking in Russia. We delighted not in what this new day has brought us but, like convalescents after the crisis in an illness, we delighted in our right to hope."[86]

Indeed at any time in history people will come forward who have a gift to look ahead, to be the first to see and make statements that will later appear self-evident.... To perceive and understand is one thing, yet actually coming forward and stating such truths is something that by no means everybody finds easy. The staff of the illegal newspaper *Kolokol* would later receive a letter entitled "Letter from the Provinces". The signature at the end of the letter is: "A Russian".

The "Russian" addresses the publisher of *Kolokol* as "Dear Sir" and writes: "On a foreign shore in distant England you, to use your own words, have raised your voice in favour of the Russian people, suppressed by tsarist power: you have shown Russia what the free press is ... and, you know this already, anyone who was still alive and honest in Russia welcomed the beginning of your enterprise with joy and delight and everyone expected that you would become the denouncer of tsarist oppression, that you would expose before your Russian audience the source of their age-old suffering—namely that

wretched obsequiousness before the person of the Tsar, and that you would single out the whole vile horror of faithful servility. Yet what has come of it all?"

Kolokol published the "Letter from the Provinces". Then Herzen started carrying on polemics with the "Russian", answering his letter. This set in motion an original dialogue between the two:

"I have already printed letters from my enemies, so why should I not print one from one of my friends 'not quite in accordance with my opinion', as is pointed out in the note attached to your letter."

—"And what of it?" the "Russian" continues. "Instead of formidable exposures of untruths from the banks of the Thames there now come to us paeans of praise for Alexander II. You have taken upon yourself this great role and therefore every word of yours has to stem from calculation not inspiration."

—"I may be making a mistake in the path I choose, and have indeed done so many times in the past, but I am sure I will not change course, neither out of fear of the imperial courier, nor out of veneration for Her Majesty's coach," Herzen responds bitterly. "Having said that, I now ask you: have I really been so mistaken after all? Who in recent years has done anything sensible for Russia, other than the Tsar? Let us render unto Caesar what is Caesar's!"

—"Poor Alexander II," retorts the "Russian" in ironic vein. "I pity him! He wishes Russia well, but the villains all around him

prevent him from carrying out his plans! Do not forget that for hundreds of years now this faith in the good intentions of tsars has been Russia's undoing."

—"We need to go further than the government in emancipating peasants and providing them with land at the same time. Our hands are untied."

—"Do you remember how you said at some time in the past that Russia as it awakens may face danger, if the liberals and the people fail to understand each other, turn their backs on each other and that this might lead to a terrible disaster—a new triumph for imperial power," comes the next attack from the "Russian". "The point is that by the end of Nicholas' reign all those people who had a sincere, deep love of Russia had become convinced that human rights for the people could only be wrested from the tsar's regime by force and that only rights which have been fought for and won will take firm root, while what is given, is easily taken away. As one of our poets said: 'Happiness was so near, so possible.' Then progressive people from the so-called educated classes would not have parted company with the people and now such a development is possible because at the very beginning of Alexander II's reign the leash pulled tight by Nicholas was relaxed a little and we almost thought that we were free...."

—"A hundred years ago," points out Herzen, "the Russian nobility decided to cast a statue of Peter III in pure gold, touched to the heart as they were by his banning of whip-

ping as a punishment for nobles. A whipped back cannot turn into an aristocratic one for a long time, the scars will be passed on down to whole generations to come."

—"The peasants whom the landowners oppress, are now ready with particularly grim determination to take up their axes in despair, while the liberals call for moderation, gradual progress in keeping with the slow pace of history and Heaven knows what else besides," writes the "Russian" continuing to defend his views.

—"What separates us is not a question of ideas but methods, not principles but courses of action," maintains Herzen. "We shall not call upon men to take up axes, that last resort of the oppressed, for as long as there remains even one reasonable hope for a solution that does not involve axes. I know of no example in history of a people with a small burden crossing to the other shore. What we need are new brooms for a clean sweep, not axes."

—"Our position is a terrible one, intolerable, and only axes can do away with it and nothing apart from axes will help! You have done everything you could to work towards a peaceful solution of the issue. Change your tone and let your *Kolokol* not call men to prayer but raise the alarm. Call upon Russia to take up the axe."[87]

It is still not certain and no one has ever managed to find out once and for all who wrote under the name "Russian". Historians suggest that Chernyshevsky[88] might have written under that name, or Dobrolyubov.[89]

They both thought and wrote in a similar vein at that time.

In time Herzen came round to the conclusion that the people had been deceived by the tsar: "I call upon the living!... Call back to us ... is there anyone in the field still alive?"[90] Peasant revolts would soon burst forth in flame. The Penza Province would be affected too. The chairman of the Penza Revenue Department, Saltykov, also known as the writer Saltykov-Shchedrin, would state that serfdom had been buried alive.

I saw the fair day dawn: Russia had
no more slaves.
Moved was I then to shed sweet
tears.
'Enough naive rejoicing! Have you deaf
ears?!'
Said the Muse, 'Now march forward
and see
If the people is happy now, it is free.[91]

The question as to what path should be followed was to become still more urgent for every thinking Russian in the years that followed. Profoundly honest and sincerely eager in their efforts to find a place in the life that had fallen to their lot, now such Russians began to seek for their own path in life, rather than to find a place for themselves within the existing social system and adapt to it. The question "Who is guilty?" had been answered. The new question everyone had begun to ask was: "What is to be done?"

Documents and Eyewitnesses Testify

STEPPING OUT OF LINE

Penza, 1860, Ilya Ulyanov numbers among the founders of a Society for the Propagation of Literacy in the Town of Penza.

From the draft for the Society's Rules: "The organisation of a Sunday school, the spread of literacy among artisans and the working class. In keeping with the wishes of the pupils and their levels of knowledge, instruction will be given in geography, history, natural sciences and the Russian language. Pupils will be acquainted free of charge with factory production."

In accordance with a decision taken by the Minister for Education permission for setting up the Society for the Propagation of Literacy in the Town of Penza was not granted, but on the other hand permission to open a Sunday school was given.

BIRTH

Pyotr Kropotkin:

...The whole of Russia was talking about education. In the press, at gatherings of educated people and even in the salons of high society favourite subjects were now the people's ignorance, the obstacles which still stood in the way of those desirous to learn, the total lack of village schools, outdated teaching methods, and what should be done about all this ... an active movement calling for the founding of Sunday schools took shape.[92]

K. D. Ushinsky:[93]

...All those people in sheepskin coats, *chuykas* (knee-length cloth jacket), *armyaks* (peasant's coats of heavy cloth), Chinese robes, with black calloused hands and grimy faces, whose smells and colours left you in no doubt as to the line of work they were engaged in, had come together in deadly earnest, not out of simple curiosity, but with a serious job to do, for which they were prepared to sacrifice several hours of the only free day in their working week. The studies they were to embark upon were regarded by them not simply as something useful and serious, but as something sacred and religious. Having expected to encounter a noisy undisciplined crowd of children, whose attention would be difficult for even the most excellent of teachers to capture, I found instead more serious pupils than I had ever come across before.[94]

Penza. From "Gubernskiye Vedomosti" (Gubernia Recorder), November 30, 1860:

Sunday Schools are nothing new, although they only began to appear in Holy Rus a short while ago. In the course of just one year 58 Sunday Schools have already been opened in various parts of Russia, and our Sunday School here in Penza is the fifty-ninth. It was opened on the thirteenth day of this month in the premises of an uyezd (district) school.

The Director of Schools in Penza Gubernia to the Counsellor of the Kazan Edu-

cational District:

...Initially senior teacher for literature, Vladimir Zakharov, from the gymnasium under my jurisdiction, was put in charge of the Sunday School, but later Zakharov handed this post over to Ulyanov, a senior teacher at the local Institute for the Sons of the Nobility.

SUSPICION

Nikolai Chernyshevsky:

...In an empire with a population of over sixty million, Sunday Schools so far can be measured in tens. What we need are tens of thousands, and it would indeed be possible to set up these tens of thousands right away or at least many thousands. Why are there only tens of them? It is because they are seen as suspect, because they are intimidated and restrained and even those who are most dedicated to the cause of education are far less enthusiastic about coming to teach in them.

From V. Dolgorukov, Head of the Third Department (of the tsarist police force) to Tsar Alexander II, December 18, 1860:

The Government cannot just stand by while half the population becomes indebted for their education not to the state, but to themselves or to private charities from some particular social class. The middle stratum of society and the unseen forces counting on its strength have arbitrarily assumed the leadership of this significant movement. The instruction they are providing free of charge

guarantees them on a firm basis the trust and gratitude of the masses, on whom they bestow their charity. Every measure which might seem to stand in the way of the proliferation of these schools would serve to set murmurings and false rumours in motion by those who are looking for just such a pretext.

From E. Kovalevsky, Minister for Education, to the Counsellors of Educational Districts, December 30, 1860:

At the present time when Sunday Schools have begun rapidly to multiply in Moscow and St. Petersburg, and to appear not only in gubernia capitals but also in uyezd towns, it is important that those in charge of local education ... should take it upon themselves to ensure with particular care that these schools do not go beyond the specific range of activities laid down, i.e. that they only teach Scripture, reading and writing and basic arithmetic. Special attention needs to be paid to ensuring that the founders and propagators of Sunday Schools be utterly trustworthy people....

Penza: "Gubernskiye Vedomosti", November 30, 1860:

What can be accomplished for the education of people in the course of a mere 50 Sundays, especially in view of the fact that there is an interval of six working days between each session?... What a labour this is for the schoolmasters who will be teaching in these schools as well, assuming that they are all individuals who are currently employed somewhere else! If we take the simpl-

est and most straightforward approach to this question—a person working somewhere else a full week will want on the day of rest to relax and compose himself, to free himself from the pressures of his everyday routine, while now he is having to work in Sunday Schools, to work conscientiously for the good of society—and who will have the strength to do this? Surely only the most zealous of progressives?—and how many of those do we have in Penza?

Penza: "Gubernskiye Vedomosti", June 5, 1861:

The Sunday School in the town of Penza is funded by voluntary donations and it has a library with books that cost a total of 212 roubles. In the winter the number of people attending the school reached 140.

DISBANDMENT

Tsar Alexander II. A Supreme Decree, June 10, 1862:

The inspectorate set up to supervise Sunday Schools and people's reading rooms has proved to be inadequate. Recently it has emerged that with the seemly pretext of propagating literacy among the people certain persons of criminal intent have sought in some of these Sunday Schools to spread harmful teachings, subversive ideas, and perverse interpretations of the rights of property and rejection of belief. With regard to the reading rooms it has also emerged that efforts

are being made to use these establishments not so as to propagate useful knowledge but to cultivate similar harmful socialist teaching. His Imperial Majesty after discussing the information gathered on this subject in his Council of Ministers has seen fit gracefully to ordain:

1. The immediate review of the rules for the establishment of the Sunday Schools.

2. The closure of all existing Sunday Schools and reading rooms until the said schools have been reorganised in accordance with the new principles.

V. Y. Stoyunin—a well-known Russian educator in the second half of the nineteenth century:

Those who previously only drew attention to the pedagogical weaknesses of the schools, now refer to them as the most harmful of establishments, set up by persons of ill intent and hostile to society. The teachers from the Sunday Schools themselves have come down in the opinion of the lower classes of society: they have come to be viewed as seditious, as persons representing a danger to the social order. This is to say nothing of the insult suffered by all the honest teachers in these schools who were thinking only of the public good and who, as they went about their demanding work, never once imagined that their labours without any proper investigation would be likened to an abuse of status by imprudent individuals.

* * *

On June 21, 1862 Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov in his capacity as an inspector of Sunday Schools was handed an official circular sent out by the Minister of the Interior concerning the disbandment of the Sunday Schools. What was bound to happen sooner or later did happen in fact. On account of his teaching activities Ulyanov, as his contemporaries testified, came to be numbered among the "persons of ill intent", or the imprudent individuals. The setting up of Sunday Schools and teaching in them had proved to be stepping out of line.

It is precisely at such a moment—when an individual first comes up against life's harsh realities—that the path to be followed is more often than not determined: a prosperous existence free once and for all from the delusions of youth, or on the other hand work in the teeth of the lessons duly handed down, and thus in the teeth of common sense as understood by the narrow-minded people. Here in Penza, and later in Nizhni Novgorod and in particular Simbirsk Ilya Nikolayevich was to be referred to on frequent occasions as an ardent liberal.

Liberal? Should we link this concept—it has definitely since acquired for us overtones of a far from positive nature—with Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov, father of Vladimir Ilyich? From an early age, from the time when he first began to take an interest in politics Lenin poured scorn on well-intentioned liberalism and was a fierce opponent of liberal phrasemongering. He wrote: "The Russian liberals express their dissatisfaction with the autocracy only in the form *sanctioned* by

the autocracy itself."[95] From his pen there also came the observation: "When a liberal is abused, he says: Thank God, they didn't beat me. When he is beaten, he thanks God they didn't kill him. When he is killed, he will thank God that his immortal soul has been delivered from its mortal clay."[96]

It is perhaps simplest of all if we recall Krupskaya's words to the effect that Lenin did not idealise Ilya Nikolayevich "despite the enormous positive influence that his father had had on him".[97]

What is also important is to examine the way in which the concepts "liberal" and "liberalism" have developed: this would probably enable us to imagine the whole history of mankind over the last two centuries, that was torn by revolutions and was overcoming cataclysms of world wars.

It is indeed true that Russian liberalism was never a decisive force in the country's political struggles. If we do nevertheless use the word "liberal" referring to Ilya Nikolayevich, then it is important to restore it to its original meaning, of which faith in liberty, equality and the triumph of reason are an integral part. We need to look back to the time when—to quote Vladimir Korolenko[98]—"The reforms introduced by Alexander II brought forth the noblest of endeavours throughout the country, brought forward many fresh forces anxious to introduce further invigorating change into the nation's way of life. It can be said without fear of exaggeration that one's readiness to fight against blatant abuses was seen by the authorities to be a direct result of the

ideas expressed by Belinsky,[99] Dobrolyubov and Chernyshevsky and came to be seen as a sign of unreliability. On the other hand official reliability was seen to go hand in hand with the old traditions of bribe-taking and abuses or at least tolerance towards such things."[100] An example of liberal writing going back to that time was the so-called denunciatory literature that criticised with great ingenuity worthless officials and the vices of the administration. A model of liberal journalism was to be the journal *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* (Fatherland Notes) which was cursed by the forces of reaction, who proceeded first to harass the staff of the journal and later to close it down. "In order to understand properly what kind of man Ilya Nikolayevich was it is necessary to read *Sovremennik* (The Contemporary)[101] published by Nekrasov and Panayev, to which Belinsky, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov contributed,"[102] advised Krupskaya.

Ilya Nikolayevich belonged to that illustrious and selfless pleiad of Russian enlighteners. A long time before the October Revolution Lenin was to write: Marxists "not only can, but must, accept the heritage of the enlighteners in its entirety, supplementing it with an analysis of the contradictions of capitalism".[103] After the victory of the October Revolution Vladimir Ilyich was to remark during a discussion of the organisation of public education that it should promote the development of true democratism, and to do that it was necessary to make use of the experience gleaned in the previous history of Rus-

sian education on which the democratic ideas of the 1860s had had such a strong impact.

The original meaning of the concept "liberal" as interpreted in Dal's[104] famous dictionary was that of a political free-thinker, a man free in his thoughts and actions. One of the manifestations of this political free-thinking was commitment to the cause of education for the people. The incident in connection with the Sunday School in Penza was only the first warning for the educator Ulyanov, whose activity was to meet with disapproval from Russian officialdom. Maria Ulyanova was to write of her father in the following terms: "At that time it was necessary to be possessed of great faith and whole-hearted devotion to the cause, genuine idealism and inexhaustible energy, in order despite all the obstacles that were placed in the way of education for the people, both by the government and the reactionary strata of society, to retain one's vitality and enthusiasm and not to lose heart, as was later to happen to many of those active in that field of education during the 'thaw', in order not to turn to the welltrodden path, but continue to dedicate all one's efforts to the service of the people and to die still working for that cause."[105]

Not only his views as an enlightener but above all the short life-span allotted to Ilya Nikolayevich, deprived him of the chance to be a witness of the triumph of reason, freedom and equality. Yet surely that does not make his selfless work devoted to others any less important.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

For Ilya Nikolayevich the question had been decided. He could provide a model for staunch adherence to a particular set of goals in life: he was determined to concern himself conscientiously and relentlessly with work of enlightenment and to let the people itself decide—what the ideals in the new era should be. Ulyanov journeyed to take up his new post in Simbirsk and from the deck of the steamer he peered down at the small villages scattered about the left gently sloping bank of the river, with the walls of houses askew and their roofs of thatch:

Living out that uncertain life
Along my beloved river's shores,
Free now from chains and free from strife,
The tireless people upholds its cause.[106]

To open schools and teach children—that was his immediate duty and concern ... the time would come when each man's every need would be fully satisfied.... The golden age—it would dawn ... we know that, but it is still to come. The "iron age" was passing and was almost a thing of the past, but the golden age had not yet begun....

Those last words—about the time when all man's needs would be satisfied, and the golden age, which would come without doubt—were not those of Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov himself. They were written by Prisoner No. 11 in the Peter and Paul Fortress in an attempt to answer the question: "What is to be done?"

Through the bars of his window in the Alexeyevsky Ravelin he used to see the sky and was engaged in a story of the new people. From the 678 days that he spent within the Peter and Paul Fortress Chernyshevsky devoted 121 to his novel *What Is to Be Done?*[107] He completed it in the spring of 1863. Straightaway before the ink was even dry, and before the censorship authorities could get their bearings, the novel appeared in the journal Sovremennik, in the issues for March, April and May of that year.

In the summer of that same year Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov married Maria Alexandrovna Blank. At that time it was probable that they had read the novel, which soon and for a long time was to be banned. Of course they would have turned their attention to the author's words to the effect that "decent people" gathered with increasing frequency. "The decent folk have begun to rally, as is only inevitable when their numbers increase with every passing year. Given time, it will be the norm; given more time still, the rule will be universal, for there will only be decent folk. And life will be very fine indeed."[108]

Chernyshevsky who held sway over the minds of many generations of Russian youth asked the question: "What is to be done?" Meanwhile his contemporary, Ulyanov, had answered that question for himself once and for all. It was clear for all to see: Chernyshevsky had not so much asked the question with his novel as answered it through the actions of his characters. Like most outstanding

thinkers Chernyshevsky did not invent, but observed; he did not fantasise but rather studied the world in which he lived. In the dreams of the heroine Vera Pavlovna the author gives his imagination free rein—after all imagination is the food of dreams—expounding his often Utopian conception of the future. As far as the lives of his characters are concerned, the "sensible egoism" of their actions, their efforts to change their environment through their selfless devotion to their cause, their new attitudes to women—all these were the fruit of what Chernyshevsky had seen, observed and wrote about.

Chernyshevsky wrote, to use Lenin's expression, with the precise observation of a natural historian. This precision was so important to Nikolai Gavrilovich Chernyshevsky that he was ready—it might almost appear—to sacrifice the most important thing of all for a writer, namely his literary talent. Chernyshevsky did not seem to set much store by that talent, what mattered to him was the truthfulness of his narrative and that the reader should believe in it. Indeed Chernyshevsky turns to the reader and says: "I haven't a drop of literary talent in me. Even my Russian is poor. No matter—read on, good people, you'll find it well worth your while. Truth is a splendid cause, it makes up for any and all shortcomings in the writer who serves it.... You are nevertheless forewarned I have no talent; you shall accordingly appreciate that my tale owes its every merit to verity and verity alone."[109]

There was a time when the reading public

had been overwhelmed by Turgenev's story *Mumu*[110]: readers had been struck by the dramatic depth of feelings of the serf characters, something they had not thought about before and been unable to imagine. Now Chernyshevsky was shedding light on a new plane of life which had no connection with the established patterns and traditions of Russian reality. Nevertheless Chernyshevsky's characters—as he himself pointed out—were no more than ordinary decent people of the new generation. Admittedly there were only a few such people to be encountered at the time of writing: "At the present time for every person, worthy of the name, alive today there are at least ten antediluvians. This however is only natural: an antediluvian world is bound to be peopled with antediluvians."

People of the new generation were those who had overcome poverty and degradation and succeeded in raising themselves up from the lowest class in society to a position where they were able to acquire knowledge, opt for a definite course of action and engage in creative work. Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov was undoubtedly among their number. Meaningful, profoundly practical aims, which people of the new generation were aspiring to, came to represent for this writer the answer to the question he himself had asked: what is to be done?

A literary work which truthfully reflects the contemporary life, gives many people the feeling that it is specifically their life that has inspired the writer, and that they in par-

ticular have provided the prototype. The Ulyanovs too must have experienced similar feelings as they pondered over the pages of *What Is to Be Done?* The action of the novel begins in 1852, when the characters Lopukhov and Kirsanov were aged twenty-one. This meant that they had both been born in 1831, the same year as Ulyanov. Not only was Ulyanov the same age as the two characters in the novel, but there would also have been much in common between the views of the literary characters and the educator Ulyanov. In Chernyshevsky's narrative aspirations towards any artificial, false ideal and disregard for life's "prose" are quite alien to his "new people". Ilya Nikolayevich devoted himself to the enlightenment of the people. To this end he was ready to take on any duties, including those of a civil servant. Having taken on those duties, he then proceeded to make use of any, even the smallest opportunity to set up and promote centres of instruction for the masses. Now let us turn to Chernyshevsky's novel where he describes men like Lopukhov and Kirsanov: "Both friends are men of courage, staunch, single-minded; both can set their hand to a thing and hold fast, so fast it's do or die and invariably done—this is one side of the type and the other—an integrity so open-handed it would never occur to you to ask 'can I count on the man through thick and thin?' It is plain as the fact that his chest rises and falls when he breathes and for as long as he does that noble breast will hold an ardent heart a safe and steady place to lay your weary head.

These, the type-constants are so pronounced as to eclipse any and all individual differences."[111]

Even the life-style of the Ulyanovs showed similarities with that of the "new people" in the novel.... Vera Pavlovna got hold of a copy of Nekrasov's new poem *Pedlars* and then says to Kirsanov: "We'll just finish our dinner and start directly—all right? I'm dying to read it but I won't touch anything without you, Sasha."[112]

Chernyshevsky set so much store by Nekrasov's poetry that he was even prepared to juggle with chronology in this case: the characters in his novel read the poem *Pedlars* in 1859, although in actual fact the poem was written by Nekrasov two years later. Yet as soon as it appeared it was to become a favourite for Maria Alexandrovna and her husband Ilya Nikolayevich: they knew it by heart from beginning to end.

The life led by Chernyshevsky's characters satisfied the moral requirements and standards of progressive people in Russia at that time. Descriptions of the Ulyanovs' life will follow later—for the moment suffice it to say that much about what Chernyshevsky writes in his novel is to be found in the family life of the Ulyanovs. This applies to the sensible rationality of the domestic routine and the training of the children to take part in household tasks and various kinds of work, mutual respect and constructive use of leisure time, not to mention the regular family reading times in the evenings....

The novel *What Is to Be Done?* upheld the

right of women to engage in independent work. The heroine Vera Pavlovna was interested in workshops and later was attracted to medicine. "Thus did Vera take up the study of medicine, one of the first women of my acquaintance to introduce the novelty among us. She felt herself transformed by the thought that 'in a few years time, I shall really and truly stand alone'. A splendid sentiment. For happiness is incomplete without complete independence. I pity women that so few of you may taste it!"

Vera Pavlovna maintained: "Women doctors would make a valuable contribution to the profession."[113] Such was the thought as expressed in the novel. In the real world of Russia at that time one of the first women doctors was to be Maria Alexandrovna's niece, her elder sister's daughter, Anna Ivanovna Veretennikova.... She turned down the opportunity to work in a hospital in St. Petersburg and went to work in the remote Belebei Uyezd of Ufa Gubernia, as a Zemstvo doctor. She toiled away relentlessly to alleviate the people's suffering.

Anna Ivanovna met the Ulyanovs in Kokushkino and visited them in Simbirsk. The person she used to enjoy talking to most was Ilya Nikolayevich: Zemstvo schools and Zemstvo hospitals were among the many topics that were of common interest. Veretennikova would tell him about her friend, one of the local teachers working for the Zemstvo: not only was she teaching the local children to read and write but in the evenings the local peasants would come together and she would

read to them and they would have discussions. That had been enough for someone to have informed on her: this had been followed by a search through her belongins, interrogation of the peasants, the arrest of the teacher and her exile, much to the regret of the whole village.

Her own life Anna Ivanovna described as follows: "During the time I have been working for the Zemstvo I have thought over and relived my experiences many, many times. The door of my little house hardly closed from morning till evening. Hordes of chronically ill people flocked to see me with suppurations, caries, chronic ulcers, syphilis, and eye diseases. Each day there would be between thirty and forty people suffering from fever, asking to be given bitter medicine. That was how they referred to quinine. Yet one of the members of the Zemstvo Council—and I quote him word for word—said that expensive drugs like quinine for example were 'harmful for the muzhik [peasant], because his is a primitive nature and the more primitive, and more important still, cheaper the drug the more beneficial the effect it will have upon him'. Doctors were short of medicines and instruments, and like most of those working for the Zemstvos, they would often go for months on end without receiving any salary. If someone were anxious to acquaint himself exclusively with the dark side of Zemstvo medicine, then I doubt whether he could find a more suitable object for his observations than Belebei Uyezd."

Anna Ivanovna returned to these reminis-

cences several years later, in Kokushkino once again, where she arrived suffering from consumption. It was at that very time when the eighteen-year-old Vladimir Ulyanov was serving the term of his first exile in Kokushkino. However Veretennikova was not able to complete her book of reminiscences entitled *Notes of a Zemstvo Doctor*. The newspaper *Volzhsky Vestnik* (Volga Herald) in its announcement of her death noted that "Anna Ivanovna Veretennikova undoubtedly belonged to the ranks of Russia's finest women".

Vladimir Ulyanov was with his cousin as she coughed herself to death, right up until the end. In her stories Vladimir heard about the hopes of those new men, of whom Chernyshevsky had written, fading and dying. It was impossible, out of the question, even at the cost of such sacrifices to improve and change that life and that society. This meant that that life and that society had to be swept away. Rakhmetov, Chernyshevsky's hero, was becoming an ever more shining ideal for Vladimir Ilyich. It was precisely in Kokushkino that the all-important encounter between Chernyshevsky and Ulyanov took place. It was there that he read *What Is to Be Done?* five times in a row. Later he was to say in connection with that novel: "Hundreds of revolutionaries were born under its impact."[114]

The revolutionary Rakhmetov was born in a cell of the Aleksandrovsky Ravelin of the Peter and Paul Fortress. It was there that Chernyshevsky went on hunger-strike—the

first in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement—and wrote about how Rakhmetov was preparing himself for imminent ordeals. The felt mat on which he slept was impregnated with hundreds of tiny nails with their points uppermost, which stuck out by three quarters of an inch. Rakhmetov spent a night on these nails and then wrote: "Experiment. 'Ts essential; improbable, I admit, but essential on the off chance. Now I know I can."[115]

Pondering over people like Rakhmetov, Chernyshevsky wrote: "Few in number, they lend vitality to all, without them all is death and bitterness, few in number, but they give breath to all, the world would suffocate without them."[116] At that time, it might have appeared, everything had yet to come. Alexander Solovyov,[117] son of a doctor's assistant, was only just thinking about entering university. Young Stepan Khalturin,[118] from a former serf's family, was still growing up. Ignaty Grinevitsky,[119] from a family of the Polish nobility, was still playing with his toys. Andrei Zhelyabov[120] was conscientiously pursuing his studies in the third class of the gymnasium. While young Sofia,[121] daughter of Perovsky, the governor of St. Petersburg, had just celebrated her tenth birthday. It is possible that Nikolai Muravyov was among the guests, the favourite son of the governor of Pskov. He was a constant participant in the games enjoyed by Sophia and her brothers. Among the nettles growing in the garden they would catch sight of a band of "robbers" and launch into the attack brandish-

ing their "sabres". Twenty years later that same Muravyov—as prosecutor at the trial on the case March 1, 1881—would demand the death penalty by hanging for the "ringleaders of the gangs of robbers", namely for Sofia Perovskaya and her comrades. Muravyov was to rise as high as Minister of Justice and become famous as a bribe-taker, the most audacious of his kind at that period. On January 29, 1897 Secretary of State Muravyov was to report to Nicholas II "on the criminal activity in St. Petersburg of secret circles of persons referring to themselves as 'social-democrats' ", and in this connection he was to include among other names that of Vladimir Ulyanov.

The ten-year-old little girl dressed in blue on her birthday was Sofia Perovskaya. She was destined to become the first Russian woman executed on account of political charges. Yes, all was yet to come!...—the courage of their deeds and their last words. Yet very soon this cohort of revolutionary giants would dazzle the world. In the fearlessness, integrity and single-minded aspirations of the Narodnaya Volya (People's Will) Revolutionaries traits of Rakhmetov's are easily recognisable....

Chernyshevsky was preparing his hero for the ordeals to come, and he himself had to face almost two years of solitary confinement in the Peter and Paul Fortress, nineteen years of exile in Siberia and then enforced settlement in Yakutsk. All those punishments were meted out on personal instructions from Tsar Alexander II. No heed was taken of any

requests for mitigation of the writer's lot. Among the petitions submitted to the tsar in this connection was the following: "Forgive me my boldness in presuming to write to Your Majesty and make a request to You. My request consists in the following: let justice be done ... to Chernyshevsky, now held in the fortress, accused of participating in a revolt, give orders I beg You for his release. I vouch to You for his complete innocence with my very life.... If it is necessary to send someone into exile send me in his place, but leave at liberty a man who thanks to his great mind could prove of tremendous benefit to society. Lyubov Kovedyayeva."

Twenty-seven years were to pass before that name was to attract attention again. This time it was in connection with the tragedy of the Ulyanov family. News reached Simbirsk of the execution of Alexander Ulyanov and his comrades. At the same time a secret report was sent to St. Petersburg: one of the employees at the Simbirsk branch of the State Bank, having read the report of the criminals' execution, commented: "People like that should be hanged." To this the bank's inspector Yegor Kovedyayev had responded with the remark: "There are too many of them, you cannot hang them all."

That was the brother of Lyubov Kovedyayeva who had submitted a petition to Alexander II. In the margin of her letter the tsar had noted: "This request is not worthy of our attention, but I wish to know what kind of relations she had with Chernyshevsky." After making enquiries the Third De-

partment informed His Majesty that the young lady by the name of Kovedyayeva was only seventeen, and since Chernyshevsky had been in the fortress almost two years, she could only have been fifteen at the time of his arrest. To this information was appended the comment that "...she probably has indulged in this imprudent action after reading all his writings".

Alexander II was to repeat on more than one occasion: "While I am alive Chernyshevsky will not leave Siberia." That was indeed to be the case. Chernyshevsky returned from Yakutsk only after the Narodnaya Volya (People's Will) revolutionaries had assassinated Alexander II.

In his customary ironic vein Chernyshevsky wrote: "The perceptive reader will doubtless infer I know more of Rakhmetov that I claim to. Perhaps. After all, I dare not contradict ... perceptiveness." The writer sent his hero off on a long, mysterious journey, remarking on that occasion: "He was far more likely to return to Russia, some three years hence by which point, as distinct from the time of speaking, his own services would be 'essential'."[122] The novel contains a conversation on the subject of Rakhmetov's return in the chapter which because of censorship was not published in the journal *Sovremennik*:

—"It's about time he should come back!

—"Yes, about time!

—"Dont't worry, he won't let the right moment go by.

—"And if he doesn't come back?

—"Well what of it?... Things are not going

to stop just because one particular individual is missing."...

"Among the Russian people a dozen or so can always be found who are so devoted to their ideals and so keenly aware of the misfortunes of their motherland that for them dying for the cause does not constitute a sacrifice."[123] No! Those last words do not stem from Chernyshevsky's pen. They were spoken by Alexander Ulyanov at his trial on March 1, 1887. Lenin wrote in connection with the novel *What Is to Be Done?* "It captivated my brother, for example, it captivated me too."[124] Chernyshevsky had written: "Things are not going to stop just because one particular individual is missing: if they have a cause, a replacement will be found ... if only there is bread to eat, teeth will appear."

The last page of his manuscript Chernyshevsky dated April 4, 1863. Let us recall that Rakhmetov was due to return to Russia three years later.... Precisely three years were to pass and, when that very same day came round—April 4th—a shot rang out near the railings of the Summer Gardens: Dmitri Karakozov had shot at Tsar Alexander II. For the first time in the history of Russia someone had made an attempt on the tsar's life on account of political convictions.

Was this just a coincidence bordering on a miracle or had Karakozov, an admirer of Chernyshevsky's, modelled his life around the writer's predictions, so that "Rakhmetov's return" might indeed take place?... Who could think or imagine then, how Karakozov's shot would affect the Ulyanov family and be

echoed twenty-one years later in the heroic sacrifice made by Lenin's brother Alexander? On April 4, 1866 he had been only five days old.

Documents and Eyewitnesses Testify

THE SHOT

"*Severnaya Pochta*" (Northern Post), *April 5, 1866*:

Today at four o'clock in the afternoon, when the Emperor, after his walk through the Summer Gardens, deigned to take a seat in his carriage, an unidentified man fired a pistol shot at his Majesty. Divine providence saved the precious life of our august sovereign. The criminal has been arrested, and an investigation of the crime is under way. St. Petersburg, April 4th.

SENTENCE

"*Severnaya Pochta*", *April 13, 1866*:

To date the work of the investigating commission has progressed so well that the criminal has been identified beyond doubt. Despite his persistent denials and his refusal to give precise positive answers to the questions put to him, the commission has succeeded in discovering that the criminal is Dmitri Vladimirovich Karakozov from Saratov Gubernia.

According to materials collected by the investigating commission and his contemporaries' reminiscences Dmitri Vladimirovich Karakozov was born in 1840 and was the son

of a landowner in Saratov Gubernia. In 1860 after graduating from the gymnasium in Penza he embarked upon his studies at the law faculty of Kazan University. He was expelled from the University on account of his participation in student unrest. He then transferred to Moscow University. After arriving in Moscow in the autumn of 1864 he immediately joined a revolutionary organisation known as the Ishutin Circle, organised by Nikolai Ishutin, his cousin. The members of this circle were planning to set free Nikolai Chernyshevsky. One of the members of the circle, N. P. Stranden, commented at the time: "We were all equally ... convinced that it was necessary to set Chernyshevsky free." Once he had resolved to make an attempt on the tsar's life, Karakozov carried out his plan without first discussing it with the members of the Ishutin Circle.

From the Proclamation "To Worker-Friends" written by Karakozov and confiscated from him while he was being searched:

I have grown sad and heavy of heart to see how my beloved people is perishing and so I have decided to kill the wicked tsar and myself to die in the name of my beloved people.

If I succeed in carrying out my plan I shall die with the thought that through my death I have brought help to my dear friend—the Russian muzhik [peasant]. If I do not succeed, I still believe that men will come forward who will follow the same path as mine. I shall have failed, but they will succeed. For them my death shall be an example and

it shall inspire them.

Let the workers understand that the man writing these lines was concerned for their happiness and may they themselves take steps to win happiness and to set Russia free from plunderers and evil-doers, relying on no one but themselves.

From the sentence pronounced by the Supreme Criminal Court on August 31, 1866:

Dmitri Vladimirovich Karakozov is accused of making an attempt on the Emperor's treasured life and of belonging to a revolutionary secret society.

...The Supreme Criminal Court when deciding upon sentence for this defendant found that, according to the law, "any plot or criminal act against the life, health or honour of the Emperor and any plan to dethrone him, deprive him of his liberty or supreme power or restrict his rights to the latter, or to perpetrate any kind of violence against his treasured person incur the death penalty for the accused and the loss of all rights to his possessions".

...Dmitri Vladimirovich Karakozov, 25 years of age, is to be stripped of all rights to his possessions and then to be put to death by hanging.

EXECUTION

News Bulletin of the St. Petersburg City Police, September 2, 1866:

State criminal Dmitri Karakozov, sentenced

to death with loss of all property rights by the Supreme Criminal Court on August 31, 1866, will be executed in Smolensky Field, St. Petersburg, on September 3rd of this year at seven o'clock in the morning.

Ilya Repin (at the time a student at the Academy of Arts)[125]:

It was broad daylight by the time a black springless cart with a small bench was first heard rattling in the distance. Karakozov was sitting in it and it gradually drew near and then passed in front of us. He and his escort advanced at a walking pace, and a mere stone's throw away from us. We had a good view of his face and the way he held himself. He was sitting stiffly and petrified, his head turned to the left. His complexion bore the mark of solitary confinement: it was pale yellow with a greyish tinge; here was a man who had not seen daylight or fresh air for a long time. His naturally curly hair had an ashen-grey sheen to it and had clearly not been washed for a long time: it stuck out in dishevelled fashion from under his prisoner's cap which he wore pulled slightly down over his forehead. His long, pointed nose was like that of a corpse, and his large grey eyes had no spark of life in them, as if they too were no longer part of this world. No hint of a living thought or feeling could be seen in them. Only his thin, tight-pressed lips betrayed a vestige of the former energy of this resolute man who had endured his lot to the very end.

Soon the crowd fell silent. All eyes were

fixed on the scaffold. The carriage drove up to it. Everyone noticed how the gendarmes took the victim's arms to help him step down and walk up the steps to the scaffold, how they took off his long black coat of heavy cloth and how Karakozov stood there unsteady on his feet, dressed now in a grey jacket and grey trousers. It looked as if he was unable to walk or was in a stupor, and his hands must have been tied. But then, like a free man, zealously, in a very Russian way, Karakozov bowed unhurriedly to those in front of him, behind him and on both sides—to the whole people. That bow immediately brought about a transformation in the crowded field: the crowd warmed and became sympathetic to this strange being, whom everyone had hurried along to stare at like some wonder of the world.

It took them a long time to pull down over the "criminal's" head the hood of unbleached canvas that was to cover him from the crown of his head to just below his knees. Once covered up in this way Karakozov needed support to keep on his feet. The gendarmes and other men on duty half led, half carried him up the narrow ramp leading to the stool, above which hung the noose attached to the black beam of the gallows. On the stool the executioner already stood at the ready: he pulled the noose down and brought it down over the victim's pointed chin. The other functionary standing by the gallows post quickly pulled the noose tight round Karakozov's neck and at that same moment the executioner jumped down from the stool,

nimbly pushing away the support from under Karakozov's feet....

REPRISALS

Pyotr Kropotkin:

After Karakozov's shot rang out on April 4, 1866 the Third Department became all-powerful. Those suspected of "radicalism"—regardless of whether they had done anything or not—lived in constant fear. Every night they might be arrested merely for knowing someone involved in political activity, for a harmless note seized during a night search, and sometimes even simply on the grounds of "dangerous convictions". Arrest on political grounds could mean absolutely anything under the sun: years of imprisonment in the Peter and Paul Fortress, exile to Siberia, or even torture in dungeon cells.

All members of the Ishutin Circle were sentenced to hard labour. In the case of Ishutin himself the original death penalty was commuted to penal servitude for life. In the Alexandrov convict prison beyond Lake Baikal he was later to go insane.... The editor of the journal *Russkoye Slovo* (The Russian Word) Grigori Blagosvetlov, the critic Varfolomey Zaitsev, the philosopher Pyotr Lavrov, the poets Vasily Kurochkin and Dmitri Minayev were arrested. The journals *Sovremennik* and *Russkoye Slovo* were closed down.

From Materials collected by the Supreme Commission of Inquiry:

While Karakozov had been at the gymnasium in Penza he had been on very friendly terms with his cousin Ishutin, who was a fellow pupil of his and who had lodgings in the house of the Russian literature teacher, Vladimir Ivanovich Zakharov, a man of highly harmful views who enjoyed considerable influence over his charges.... Zakharov is held by the inhabitants of Penza to be not just a man of dubious views, but even to be highly dangerous because of his consummate skills in bringing young people round to his point of view, exerting a harmful influence over them and filling their minds with rebellious desires that might well prove their downfall.

(Vladimir Zakharov had been a colleague of Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov at the Penza Institute for the Sons of the Nobility. It was Zakharov who had put Ulyanov in charge of the Sunday School. Among Zakharov's pupils were various future members of the Ishutin Circle. Ishutin and Karakozov had once lodged at Zakharov's flat where Ulyanov had also lived).

Maria Ulyanova:

In response to questions from the officials conducting the inquiry into the Karakozov case, and who had shown an interest in the political complexion of the staff at the Penza Institute for the Sons of the Nobility and in the Penza boys' gymnasium, from among whose pupils had come the majority of the members of the Ishutin Circle, a field-officer from the local gendarmerie described Zakharov as a man "who exerted a most

harmful political influence on his pupils" and Zakharov had to give up his career as a teacher.

Our father's name was also mentioned during the investigation into the Karakozov case. Before his arrest in the spring of 1864, Stranden, another member of the Ishutin Circle who had previously been a pupil at the Penza Institute for the Sons of the Nobility, had gone to Nizhni Novgorod in order to take his final exams to graduate from the gymnasium. While in Nizhni Novgorod he had stayed with his friend Vasilyev. When called to give evidence during the Karakozov case Stranden stated in answer to the investigator's question as to his friends in Nizhni Novgorod: "Apart from Vasilyev's relatives and my former teachers Ulyanov and Aunovsky I had no acquaintances there."

A letter from Ilya Nikolayevich was also used in evidence at the trial, a letter which he had given to one of his former pupils, who was later called to give evidence at the Karakozov trial, in order to help him obtain a place at Moscow University.[126]

(Stranden was later sentenced to twenty years of hard labour).

* * *

The days of terror dragged on—arrests, searches, denunciations, interrogations. Many people were busy burning letters, manuscripts, avoiding any conversations or even meetings with friends and acquaintances.

We now know that Ilya Nikolayevich's

name was mentioned six times in the materials collected by the Commission of Inquiry, although he was not summoned for interrogation or asked to give evidence.

Ilya Nikolayevich felt bitter at the oppressive injustice of the accusations that hung over him: with his whole heart and soul he opposed violence and assassinations, they went against his conscience and all his convictions.

Later on, while thinking about the stages of the revolutionary struggle, his son Vladimir Ilyich was to write that, as he looked back many years after the controversy about which path of action to take was over, it was of course no longer difficult to demonstrate the wisdom of the decision to abandon terror, the inefficiency of which was so clear and borne out by all the experience of the Russian revolutionary movement.[127] Yet he noted that it was also important to bear in mind that the next generation of Russian revolutionaries had, in their early youth, worshipped the terrorist heroes and begun to take up revolutionary ideas along the lines propagated by the members of the Narodnaya Volya (People's Will) movement.[128]

Ilya Nikolayevich realised not only that an abyss was opening up in front of Karakozov, but that a tragedy had befallen many people who were dear to him. Extreme action inevitably brings repression in its wake and has a disastrous effect on those who are campaigning for gradual progress.

His son Vladimir Ilyich noted on several occasions that an act of revolutionary courage

leaves its mark on history: an individual revolutionary should not be "appraised from the point of view of the outwardly useless and often fruitless sacrifices he has made" while the "nature of his activities and their connection with the activities of preceding and succeeding revolutionaries" are not taken into account.[129]

The courage of the individual revolutionary is often destined to rend asunder the gloom of the darkest night, to provide an example that will be followed immediately and perhaps many years later as well. The revolutionary, like the soldier blown to pieces on the minefield, is destined to point the way forward to those following behind through his sacrifice. "I call upon the living! Answer me, if there is but one living man out there in the field...." Yet courage of this sort does not spark off whole revolutions if the time is not ripe, if those who are the revolutionary's contemporaries are not ready.

Fifty years had to pass--not so very long in the life of a nation. Then another April day would dawn, like the one on which the prisoner Karakozov was interrogated. It would be in the same St. Petersburg, or rather not really the same because it would be the Petrograd of 1917. Autocracy had been overthrown. On the square in front of the Finland Station thousands of people would be meeting Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin) on his return from his years abroad as an émigré. He himself had not expected such a welcome. After crossing the frozen river from the Swedish to the Russian border on a sleigh, Lenin

had telegraphed his younger sister Maria and his elder sister Anna in Petrograd with the message: "Arriving Monday night 11. Inform *Pravda*."[130] In the train on the way to Petrograd Lenin remarked to Nadezhda Konstantinovna that if they were not arrested on arrival it would be impossible to find a cab at such a late hour. On the square in front of the station it was indeed impossible to find cabs, there was no room even for a pin to drop. Everywhere there was a lot of people. Lenin climbed up onto an armoured car and, as the newspapers were later to report: "The whole crowd walked in a body behind the car to the Kshesinskaya mansion,[131] where the meeting continued."[132]

All along Nizhegorodskaya and Botkin Streets, down Sampsoniyevsky Avenue and Finland station.... The columns of workers, soldiers and sailors could be seen in the beams of the floodlights. The floodlights fixed up on the walls of the Peter and Paul Fortress were picking out its fortified gates through which had passed every generation of Russian revolutionaries.

It was in the same St. Petersburg.... There, on Senate Square, an apathetic crowd had surrounded the Decembrists.[133]

It was here that Chernyshevsky had been subjected to a public execution and only a very small proportion of those round the scaffold had shared his feelings of anger and pain, or his ideas. Others with faces distorted by curiosity had climbed up onto stools or benches, or hung onto fences, anything so as not to miss the "big moment"....

Nearby, by the railings round the Summer Gardens, the crowd had thrown itself at Karakozov. As he defended himself from the blows he kept repeating: "What are you doing to me, you fools?: I did it for you, for you! To help the Russian peasants!"

Here, on Nevsky Prospekt, after an explosion had rung out, there had been a ripple of horror through the crowd as the news spread like lightning: "Alexander II has been killed!" Many people were sobbing, or cursing the criminals. Yet the people realised then that the tsar was not immortal, that he could be killed.

And then the columns of marching people, numbering many thousands, made their way through the town on the night of April 1917....

* * *

In the autumn of 1869 Collegiate Councillor Ulyanov arrived in Simbirsk with his wife and two children.

A photograph has survived to this day of the landing-stage at Simbirsk. Carpets are laid out and there are flags fluttering in the breeze—the photograph had been taken when some royal personage was being welcomed. On that autumn day when Ulyanov appeared on the same landing-stage, a very different scene would have met his eyes. There is nothing very memorable about the arrival of an inspector of elementary schools. Yet there was much in his future that Ilya Nikolayevich himself did not know about. He did not know

that he was to spend the last sixteen years of his life in Simbirsk. He did not know that he was not only to achieve recognition in this town but also that his hopes were to be shattered. What was more, fifty-five years later that town was to be given the name of Ulyanovsk.

A Chain of Sunlit Days

So it was that in the autumn of 1869 the Ulyanovs first caught sight of Simbirsk. How did it appear to them at first glance? First impressions, as we all know, fade with the years, and now there is no knowing. Later on the Ulyanov family came to like the lines by the poet Korenev on the subject of Simbirsk, which painted a very vivid picture of the town:

That far-away town on the river,
Which was always too dear to forget,
On the Volga's high banks stands for ever,
Its pavements of planks close set.
Simple and countrified were its ways,
A common sight were cows and sheep;
Deep puddles to cross on bright spring days,
After winter's drifts so white and deep.
I recall the cathedral's golden dome,
Filling small houses with shining hope:
The fruit-filled orchards of our home,
That stood on the hills' steep slope.
Springless carriages rattled fast,
Chuvash and Tatar thronged the street:

Here we found true Russia's past,
Friendly "boyars" all comers would
greet.

Simbirsk was to become the Ulyanovs' home town. In fact, in the autumn of 1918, that was how Lenin was to refer to it when he received a report that Simbirsk had been liberated while he was still convalescing from his wound: "The capture of Simbirsk, my home town, is a wonderful tonic, the best treatment for my wounds. I feel a new lease of life and energy."[1 3 4]

All the Ulyanovs would recall their home town, but differently. It was not a question of the sights it had to offer, or the town's situation or history. The losses that were to befall the Ulyanov family were truly great ones, far too great to forget. The chain of sunlit days was to be interrupted with cruel suddenness.

As time went by Vladimir Ilyich was to refer to Simbirsk as a little backwater of a town. His sister Anna described Simbirsk as a remote little backwater as well. His younger sister Maria remembered it as a "small provincial town, quiet and peaceful...".

At first, after the move to Simbirsk, Maria Alexandrovna pined for her former home. In Nizhni Novgorod, where the family had lived for six years, she had made a circle of acquaintances, and had made some close women friends. They used to gather and play the piano, talk and arrange literary evenings: Tolstoy's *War and Peace* was then being published in serial form.... For Maria Alexandrovna Sim-

birsk was a poor substitute for Nizhni Novgorod. She was a sociable person by nature and here she felt condemned to a life of solitude. The rare visits from a young friend who worked as a school-mistress in one of the nearby villages were happy events.

The Ulyanovs' first home in Simbirsk was on Streletskaya Street, which was far from being one of the smartest in the town. They rented a wing of Pribylovskaya's house overlooking the courtyard.

There was no garden attached to the house. Anna and Alexander used to run down to the Stary Venets common, where they would dig in the sand looking for pebbles and pieces of pottery, and would always find some treasure to bring home. That particular place, unlike the Novy Venets common, was deserted and overgrown. It only came to life during public holidays. Then all would be out walking, and bright shirts and pinafore dresses would add colour to the scene. Everyone would be eating dried fish and sunflower seeds, leaving behind them a carpet of the husks from the seeds and fish tails all nibbled clean. The concertina music would go on all night and late into the evening the songs would become wilder and drunken brawls would begin.... The inmates of the nearby local prison would peer out from behind their bars at the revelling townsfolk.

Lenin's sister Anna recalled the pale, unshaven faces with haunted eyes looking out from behind the bars and the sound of clanking chains, that she saw as a child: "I remember how that gloomy building with its gloomy

inmates made our hearts heavy: just as we were filled with excitement at the beautiful view over the Volga, at the song of the birds in the orchards on the slopes of the hills or at the 'treasures' we used to collect, so the clank of the chains, the harsh cries or curses from within the prison made us shudder as we peered round over our shoulders. As well as fear for those people, our young hearts were also filled with great pity for them. I remember the reflection of that pity in Sasha's eyes. I can still see before me that thin face with its delicate features and dark eyes fixed avidly on the bars of that window."[135]

Pribylovskaya's house was at the end of Streletskaya Street, which ended at the square with the prison. That was how it came about that this prison was to be the first institution of the Russian Empire which constantly confronted the children of the Ulyanov family. As the years went by—some twenty of them—that particular type of public building was to become all too familiar to them.

"I am comfortable, the food is decent and I cannot really say I lack anything.... I am in good physical and mental shape.... Once more farewell," Alexander wrote from a solitary cell in the Peter and Paul Fortress in his last letter to his sister Anna before he was executed.[136]

When Vladimir Ulyanov, himself at the time in exile in Siberia, heard about his younger brother's arrest, he recalled his own spell in a solitary cell in the St. Petersburg prison for those temporarily detained, and in a let-

ter to his mother he gave his brother Dmitri practical advice. "I can at least say from my own experience that *every day*, with great pleasure and profit I did my gymnastics before going to bed. You loosen up so well at times that it makes you warm even in the worst cold, when the cell is like an ice-well, and after it you sleep better. I can recommend to him an exercise that is very convenient (even if funny)—bow to the ground 50 times. I set myself that stint and was not embarrassed when the warder watched me through the peephole and was amazed that a prisoner who had never expressed a desire to attend the prison church should suddenly have become so pious! He must bow not less than fifty times, without bending his legs and must touch the floor with his fingers each time."[137]

Many of the letters that Maria Alexandrovna was to write to her children would be addressed to St. Petersburg, Moscow and Kiev prisons. The first person to read these letters would always be an assistant prosecutor, who would examine every page with a special chemical solution to search for any messages in invisible ink and would carefully strike out those lines which were not appropriate in his view for the prisoners to read. Then he would stamp the letter with the word "Checked" and finally hand it to the addressee.

In a letter to her daughters in Lukyanovsk prison, Maria Alexandrovna wrote: "My dear Anna and Maria, I have not written to you for a long time, but today I resolved to do so, especially since I can't visit you now....

"I heard that there had been some unrest in your prison, which disturbed me greatly! They say that many of the prisoners have been refusing to see their visitors ... they have probably been doing so on account of their overwrought nerves ... it is very sad... I do not understand whom they are punishing by taking this step. Only all their poor relatives, who already are living sad lives without their dear ones... and for the staff in the prisons who treat the prisoners so roughly, all it means is less work if there are no visits, and I am sure they will be downright pleased....

"Well, I hope that you are not involved in these unpleasant incidents.... I should feel less worried, if I could believe that...."[138]

As children they used to run past the prison, frightened even to look round lest they should catch sight of the prisoners whom they pitied. In those days no one could have guessed that the Ulyanov children would get to know prison not merely from the outside, but everything there is to know about it from the inside as well—its routine and regulations, visits, exercise periods, parcels....

RECREATING THE DISTANT PAST

You think back over what you have lived through and return to your thoughts, feelings and actions of past years. They are like witnesses of your individual life, yet at the same time they were brought forth and shaped by the age that was allotted to you by society

and the world around you, by its concerns and hopes.... The unity of the particular and the general. It is as if you are looking through binoculars: they bring nearer all that is small and inconspicuous, enlarging it and singling it out from the general background. As soon as you turn the binoculars round, however, those very same details move into the distance and merge again into the general background, blending in with it once more.

When you decide to turn your thoughts to the past, the sensation is similar. You take an interest in some fact from the past, some event, someone's life, and as you try to peruse something specific, complete with all its details, you draw nearer and the details become enlarged. Yet how should the very essence of that past be brought nearer, what steps need to be taken for us to understand a life that is long since gone, if we ignore the general background, the world that surrounded our subject?...

How should we bring back that distant past, imagine the nineteenth-century Simbirsk in which the Ulyanovs lived, transport ourselves back in time to the 1870s-1880s? How is it best to blend together their close family life with the everyday pattern of life in that town on the Volga, in the Russia of those times?

A great deal has been written about Simbirsk, not only in recent times but in the last century as well. The writings of Martynov, *The Town of Simbirsk During the 250 Years Since It Was Founded*, or Superansky, *Simbirsk and Its Past*, contain historical materials

of unique value. The newspaper *The Gubernia Vedomosti* provides a most useful guide to the old city of Simbirsk, its sites, customs and way of life. There exists a large number of other sources. Let us try with their help to journey back into the past, linking together the various facts about the things the Ulyanovs would have seen around them and which would have had a bearing on the life of that family.

Like most Russian towns of that era, Simbirsk experienced numerous devastating fires. The most catastrophic of these befell the town in August 1864, five years before the Ulyanovs arrived. The flames raged for nine days, swept forward by the wind from one district to another, destroying almost the whole town and reducing its archives to ashes.

The Ulyanovs were to see the traces of that fire: scorched patches of waste ground, charred churches, piles of blackened bricks. The town was still being restored to its former state.... In time preference came to be given to stone buildings. When the Ulyanovs finally left Simbirsk in the summer of 1887, there were 646 stone buildings in it, which accounted for almost a seventh of the total number....

The inhabitants were distributed through the various districts according to their occupation and their property, which meant that the town consisted of three main parts—those inhabited by the gentry, the merchant class and the lower middle class. The cathedrals and rich residences, gubernia (provincial) and

municipal offices, and almost all the educational establishments, the theatre, the gentlemen's club and the best hotel were, of course, all in the part of the town inhabited by the gentry.

A fair number of old and illustrious noble families traced their roots back to Simbirsk. Their sons served in the cavalry, others in the Guards and each winter they would return to their estates. Daughters lived with their parents until they married--usually neighbouring landowners. In the winter there was no end to the balls, dinners, outings in sledges drawn by three horses abreast, so much so that there were not enough days in the week to fit everything in.... In comparison with other towns on the Volga, Simbirsk was recognised as the prince among paupers--the Nobleman on the Volga. Indeed it was referred to as the gentry's town: the local gentry, whose families were closely linked by ties of marriage, was definitely a force to be reckoned with. If someone from that stratum of society behaved in a clearly reprehensible way, the whole of society sought to defend the culprit, tried to justify and protect him.

The Ulyanovs of course did not concern themselves with all those family genealogies and customs. Yet the rigid caste system so inherent in Simbirsk's way of life could not but affect their life too. Members of the gentry kept strictly to their own class when it came to social activities. Furthermore, as Lenin's sister Anna was to write later: "Mother did not seek an entry to the social func-

tions of the gentry. She used to be invited but did not go....” Civil servants only mixed socially with other employees of their own particular department strictly in accordance with the table of ranks. Only later, after Ilya Nikolayevich had been appointed Director of Elementary Schools, did friendly ties form between his family and those of his associates, the school inspectors.

Subscriptions to the *Simbirsk Gubernia Vedomosti* were collected by the city police chiefs and superintendents, by the district police officers, who knew every single member of the reading public. By the beginning of the 1870s one copy of the newspaper was printed for every thousand inhabitants of the gubernia, and one number of the gubernia journal for every 1,700.

The Ulyanovs used to subscribe to at least three newspapers. In the light of local statistics this was as many newspapers as were printed for three thousand inhabitants of the gubernia. When it came to journals the Ulyanovs used to read: *Istorichesky vestnik* (Historical Messenger), *Vestnik Yevropy* (European Messenger), *Semeiniye vechera* (Family Evenings), *Zhurnal Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniya* (Journal of the Ministry of Education) and at least half a dozen others. If we turn to statistics again, this means that this particular family read the same number of journals as would normally be printed for more than ten thousand people. These arbitrary calculations must inevitably bring forth smiles. Yet they do have a certain value: in their own way they illus-

trate how strikingly narrow was the range of the reading public in Russia, even at the end of the last century. Here we find the explanation for the fact that seems astonishing today: members of the Russian intelligentsia of those times were to a large extent all known to each other. The secret behind this lies precisely in their small numbers. Educated people in St. Petersburg and Moscow would have read and known about the educator Ulyanov, living in Simbirsk. Ilya Nikolayevich himself was acquainted and corresponded with many progressive teachers of his times....

From the top of Simbirsk hill right down to the banks of the Volga River all the slopes were covered with orchards, and when these were all in bloom they were a joy to behold. The sale of fruit and their processing provided an important source of income for many of the townspeople.

The Ulyanovs also used to recall those orchards. Decades later, after Vladimir Ilyich had left the town, he asked, on meeting a visitor from Simbirsk: "How are things at the moment? Are the orchards intact?... The Anise apples there were wonderful."[139]

Within the grounds of the Monastery of the Intercession there had been a cemetery since the middle of the eighteenth century—a cemetery for the privileged of course. The prices for a grave there were high—they could be as much as two hundred roubles.

In a frosty January of 1886 Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov was to be buried in the cemetery of the Monastery of the Intercession....

The streets of Simbirsk were open to both the winter winds and the blazing heat of summer: there were no trees in them. Permission was given for trees to be planted in the city's streets only in the middle of the 1890s. That was to be after the Ulyanovs' time. Nor was there a railway in the town in their day. The Simbirsk-Inza line was only built at the end of the century: the first engine was brought to Simbirsk from Nizhni Novgorod by river in 1898. Nor was electric light for either private houses or the streets anything people could even dream about in those days -the lights of Simbirsk would not be switched on until 1911....

It is possible to paint widely differing pictures of any town, or any age according to the facts. It is possible, for instance, to give the number of taverns in the town, of which Simbirsk had more than its fair share. Or one might point to the existence of a library in the town: the one in Simbirsk bore the name of the great historian Karamzin.[140] Of more immediate interest to us is the fact that Ilya Nikolayevich was a member of the library's council and that the Ulyanov family made wide use of the books on its shelves.

It is worth remembering, among other things, that the Decembrists Nikolai Turgenev and Vasily Ivashev came from Simbirsk Gubernia while other Decembrists—Alexander Odoyevsky, Fyodor Bashmakov, Dmitri Zavalishin—had links with that gubernia. Nikolai Ogaryov[141] also lived in Simbirsk Gubernia. It was there, as he pondered the fate of Russia, that he wrote:

This world of oppression,
Slavery and deceit,
I am ready to oppose,
For as long as my heart shall beat....[142]

As a counterweight to all that we might turn to a description of local morals, found in the records kept by one of the local Justices of the Peace, Valerian Nazariev: "...there are young ladies who regard it as beneath them to stand during a hearing on one and the same platform as a peasant; there are priests who are ready at a moment's notice to turn a peaceful parish into a battle-field; there are venerable old men who, without any right to do so, twice in a row will go out and birch a woman in the street in broad daylight; there are husbands who will cut off their own wives' plaits and fingers and who with impunity will hit them round the head and whip them; there are fathers who will drive out their daughters into the snow in an advanced state of pregnancy; there are salesmen in the taverns recently released from gaol, who will commit robbery in broad daylight or who turn their public houses into some kind of cache for pawned or stolen property; in some places there is such wild drunkenness that you will find women who have bartered even their clothes for drink and who will then run several miles through a snow-storm bare-foot and in nothing but a thin shift...."

These records drawn from the past and examples illustrating bygone days that are of little immediate relevance to us today can be laid out and piled up like so many cards in

a game of Patience. Yet at some stage a true picture of life in Simbirsk emerged from the clash of opposing points of view. How can we summon up those controversies of old and imagine the arguments that were going on a hundred years ago?

Each town honours its citizens whose far-flung fame, or even illustrious names contribute to local pride. For Simbirsk in the second half of the last century just such a local figure was Ivan Alexandrovich Goncharov[143]—author of the novels *A Common Story* and *Oblomov*: born in Simbirsk, he had even travelled round the world on the frigate *Pallada*. During the 1860s Goncharov still used to visit Simbirsk. While planning his future novel, *The Precipice* he again came to investigate the history of his home town, spent some time there, happily visited various friends and would spend long hours conversing in the local salons trying to bring back to life the impressions of his adolescence. Using Goncharov's notes and letters it is possible to imagine at least one of those early encounters, for example with an admirer of the past, of belles lettres and, of course, a local patriot.

Our amateur local historian might greet the dear guest in the following vein: "How nice to see you here again safe and sound, dear Ivan Alexandrovich! Which way did you come to Simbirsk?"

—"I wanted to come by way of the Volga from Kazan, but I was told that if an unfavourable wind were to blow up, then two weeks would not suffice to travel even two

hundred versts [132.58 miles]. So I had to travel by post-chaise and drink the cup of travel woes to the last drop. The heat-wave had burnt both grass and wheat, the ground was full of cracks, and so were my face and lips soon after I set out. The journey seemed endless. One night a storm caught us as we drove through a forest, one such as I had never seen before but only read about. But not even the storm made the air any fresher: the next morning the heat was just as bad, only the sun, instead of scorching us as before, enveloped us in a kind of wet, burning mist.... And still it went on. The poetry of troika rides is lost to me for ever now, as is the romance of the coachman and his tinkling bells...."

—"The miseries of travel are compensated for by the joys of finding hearth and home again," remarks the local patriot with a sympathetic smile in response to the writer's complaints.

—"Yes, life is always pleasant for me in Simbirsk, free and easy, restful, tranquil almost to the point of boredom. Here you can hear a mile off if a cart is driving along, or if a passer-by's boots strike on the pavement. I myself feel I want to doze off, when I look at this sleepy place."

—"We have heard a good deal about your future work, in which you intend to shed light on the life and customs of our locality. I must confess that, in expectation of your visit, I have devoted my labours to preparing, if not a lecture, then at least a report on the history of our town and its environs."

—"Be so kind as to let me hear it," said the writer obligingly, making ready to listen.

—"Right up until the end of the eighteenth century our town was called Sinbirsk. Now its population numbers about thirty thousand. In Simbirsk there are two steam-powered mills...."

Ivan Alexandrovich's patience did not last very long and he could not help interrupting the local historian: "Forgive me, but such facts have been familiar to me from an early age. Even the goat out in the street seems familiar. By the way, I've already noticed that cows are still kept in every garden, along with goats, sheep, pigs, hens and ducks."

—"Recently, in order to relieve the townspeople of this unfortunate state of affairs, the police have begun to fine anyone who keeps livestock, which wanders up and down the streets and boulevards, unsupervised," points out the local historian with a sigh. Then he takes heart as he remembers: "I should like to report also that active steps are being taken to improve our town, we are not just marking time. We now have four hundred lamp-posts. Moreover, it is worth noticing that the lamps are fuelled not with rape oil but with kerosene, which in itself reflects the rapid technological progress of our times. Twenty years ago the town only possessed a few wooden plank bridges, or, to use the Muscovite term, pavements. We now have large numbers of these plank bridges. We also already have four paved streets, although it must be admitted, they have not yet been paved from end to end."

—"Well I never, well I never," says Goncharov in a wry tone, teasing his informant. "I read recently in the *Simbirsk Vedomosti* that people are asking how they should set about travelling from one end of the town to the other. If you set off on foot, then although you may not drown, your galoshes will probably get left behind, stuck in the mud. If on the other hand you take a cab, you will arrive in galoshes at least, but you will be splashed in mud from top to toe."

—"I should like, Ivan Alexandrovich," continues the indefatigable local historian still anxious to direct the conversation along the course he had planned it should take, "to turn your attention to the fact, that 1,350 of the noble families of the land can trace their origins back to this part of the world."

—"As far as I am concerned I should like to go and visit the Syzran Uyezd," goes on Goncharov regardless. "I remember that two landowners lived at opposite ends of a large village—fellow revelers, riding to hounds and playing cards. Each one of them had a large-bore cannon. When either of the two invited the other to come and see him he would fire his cannon. If the man thus summoned was ready to accept the invitation, he would reply with another shot, and if not, then he would fire twice, thereby inviting the other landowner to come and visit him instead. Then there came the time when neither one of the two was ready to give in and visit the other and the firing went on until they ran out of powder...."

By this time the local historian was also be-

ginning to run out of patience—there was a limit to the number of times he was prepared to listen to reproaches from the famous guest: "There is no shortage of such incidents to be cited in other gubernias as well. On the other hand, are there many towns you could name that have bookshops like the ones in Simbirsk? Nor is our theatre second-rate."

—"I have been to the theatre here. It would have been funny if it had not been so tedious. The spectators clap, although there is not a glimmer of talent to be observed in any of the actors. However I am glad for Simbirsk that it has a theatre at all. Yet it is foolish, coming from St. Petersburg, to start mocking the actors here. That is why I made sure I kept a serious expression on my face for propriety's sake, while yawning discreetly."

—"Your comments are most apt with regard to St. Petersburg habits. But why, dear Ivan Alexandrovich, do you paint everything in such black colours and only pay heed to all that is negative?"

—"Do you know, I wonder, what Gogol[144] replied when reproached with not having introduced a single positive character into his play *The Government Inspector*. Everyone would have liked to put himself in the place of a positive character, and no one would have wanted to identify with Khlestakov, or the Mayor, or any of the others...."[145]

After a conversation such as that the two men—writer and local historian—would have parted company, highly dissatisfied with each other.

A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country! But why? Each one of us is free to judge in his own way, in his own manner the world he finds himself in today, and how he thinks it will develop....

Documents and Eyewitnesses Testify

THE SOWER

Ye sowers of knowledge on Russia's rich soil!

. . . . . .

Come, ye the bold with your bags that contain
Good, healthy seeds—do not idle remain
Help those who, hesitant, plant grain by grain,
Build up their ranks!
Sow what is wise, what is good, what is true—
Glad will the people of Russia to you
Give of their thanks.

"To Sowers" by
Nikolai Nekrasov[146]

N. F. Bunakov—teacher and advocate of democratic ideas in Russian education during the second half of the nineteenth century:

We were all convinced of one thing: the children of the liberated serfs needed to be taught, and no resources or effort should be spared to this end. The vista before us was spacious and wide, yet not only was there no well-trodden path before us, but not even any vague landmarks to guide us on our way.[147]

APPOINTMENT

"*Simbirskiye Gubernskiye Vedomosti*" (Simbirsk Gubernia Gazette) October 25, 1869.

By order No. 19 of the Ministry of Education, on September 6th of this year, a teacher from the Nizhni Novgorod Gymnasium, Collegiate Councillor Ulyanov has been appointed Inspector for Elementary Schools in Simbirsk Gubernia.

Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov:

With regard to the number of its schools, Simbirsk Gubernia is definitely better off than certain others: however, 89, or 19 per cent of the total, were fairly well organised, while the others either only existed on paper, or if they did exist were only a pathetic travesty of what a school should be. During my first inspection of elementary schools in January 1870, there were no schools for girls at all in the villages of Mostovaya Sloboda and Karlinskoye in Simbirsk Uyezd, although they were duly registered; in the villages of Sabancheyevo, Zhdamirovo and Poretskoye in Alatyr Uyezd, the schools were a pathetic sight. In the first of those villages the school was housed in the church vestry, which was like an ice-house: there I found three boys making a poor attempts at reading by syllables. They were on their own because the local priest-cum-teacher had gone off to administer the sacrament in a neighbouring village.[148]

Valerian Nazariev, member of the Simbirsk Uyezd School Council:

The new inspector turned out to be a man

quite incapable of being content with a formal, strictly bureaucratic attitude to schools: this active, restlessly energetic teacher found it difficult to stay put in one place. He kept on travelling round the gubernia and then, when he had arrived back in town, he would immediately ring at everyone's door, wake the chairman and members of the Council, interrupting their peaceful existence with alarming reports to the effect that the majority of schools existed only on paper and that teachers never used to come to school at all and that the pupils knew neither how to read and write nor the most well-known prayers....

It was impossible to get rid of this restless teacher: behind the doors, whose bells he kept ringing, public opinion was taking shape; some of the finest people in the town in those days were now on his side, fired with a sincere desire to do good for the ignorant people and to work for their well-being....[149]

K. M. Ammosov—inspector of Elementary Schools who worked under Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov:

Ilya Nikolayevich had to organise the whole school system from first principles so to speak: to define the tasks and goals of school education, to elaborate in detail the range of the curriculum and the syllabuses to be used, to distribute the content of those syllabuses within the period of compulsory schooling, choose textbooks and show every teacher how they should be used, and to demonstrate to everybody how various methods and techniques should best be exploited in

practice thereby helping actually to train the teachers.... All this he had to do not in one particular town or uyezd but throughout the whole of Simbirsk Gubernia.[150]

SERVICE

"Simbirsk Gubernia Gazette", November 25, 1872:

The acting Chief Officer of the gubernia has announced that a teachers' college is to be opened in the village of Poretskoye on Novemeber 19th of this year.

M. F. Superansky, Simbirsk historian at the end of the nineteenth century:

...this meant that our gubernia was one of the first to acquire a special educational establishment for the training of elementary school teachers.[151]

A. A. Volkov, teacher at an elementary school in Simbirsk Gubernia:

I saw Ilya Nikolayevich for the first time during the graduation ceremony at the Poretskoye teachers college....

Ilya Nikolayevich turned to us graduates with the question as to where we should like to go to work. All 22 of us, with one voice, said that we should like to work in a town. Ilya Nikolayevich looked at us reproachfully and said that, first of all, that would be impossible, and he also reminded us that in the towns there were plenty of sources of enlightenment and culture other than ourselves. Then he painted us a picture of the future, described what our role was and that what

awaited us was a joyful, truly great task—that of a TEACHER. He said what was important was to set out to the remote areas, where dark ignorance still reigned. Then, at the end of our course of study, he allocated me the post of teacher in the village school at Ibressi in the Alatyr Uyezd. Before taking up my post I had already travelled there and seen what a terrible place it was, that all the school building consisted of was bare walls without any desks, blackboards or even a cupboard. I wrote to Ilya Nikolayevich that I would not go there. During the vacation period he visited the Alatyr Uyezd and asked me to come and see him. "I know that the world can offer few sights more horrible than this school, but show people what you are made of, that you know what you have been trained for," he said, "and you will be able to set the school up as something worthy of the name. See a set of pupils through the elementary course."[152]

Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov:

In order to improve the instruction provided and so as to organise schools properly it is essential that there should be teachers' congresses in every uyezd, the task of which would be to acquaint teachers through practical demonstrations with the best methods available for teaching their particular subject studied in the elementary school.[153]

V. A. Kalashnikov, teacher in an elementary school in Simbirsk Gubernia:

...Ilya Nikolayevich began to organise teach-

ers' congresses for those working in villages throughout the whole gubernia, so that the teachers, both men and women, might all acquaint themselves with new methods and techniques for teaching their particular subjects, listen to accounts of their colleagues' classroom experiences, give model lessons and listen conscientiously and with open minds to an analysis of such lessons by colleagues. In this last enterprise I[lya] N[ikolayevich] arranged things just as he did during the practical sessions: from among our ranks he would pick out first-class teachers, meticulous lecturers and sensible critics.[154]

Valerian Nazariev:

Rumours about the first congress, planned by Ulyanov at an early stage, aroused incredible excitement among our village teachers, and at the beginning of September 1873, if I remember rightly, all manner of carts and light carriages hastened to the congress...

The last day of the congress happened to fall on a holiday. Even before mass a whole crowd of teachers, together with their inspector and one of the members of the council, set off to the telegraph office. There Ulyanov acquainted them with the laws of electricity and after mass he showed them the physics laboratory of the military high school. There was nothing else worth showing them in our town. Truthfulness demands that we also relate how, after the congress had finished, our teachers, who had been given only five roubles to pay their expenses throughout the whole two weeks of the

congress, and had no money left to make their way back to their villages. Whether they liked it or not all they could do was turn to the charity of private individuals and gaze upon the embarrassed faces of their benefactors as they wandered up and down the streets with their petition letter. Despite this unfortunate turn of events Ulyanov was radiant throughout the congress, in his seventh heaven, and the young teachers set off home filled with a new lease of life and unbounded enthusiasm for bringing as much good and happiness as possible to their charges.[155]

RECOGNITION

"Simbirsk Gubernia Gazette", August 24, 1874:

The Assistant Minister of the Ministry of Education has appointed Councillor of State Ulyanov to be Director of Elementary Schools in Simbirsk Gubernia as from the 11th day of July last.

A. D. Pazukhin—Marshal of the nobility in the Alatyr Uyezd, Simbirsk Gubernia:

There has been a considerable advance in the local provision of schooling since the beginning of the 1870s.... It is essential to mention in this connection our gratitude for the tireless activities of the former inspector and now Director of Elementary Schools in our gubernia, Mr. I. N. Ulyanov. Thanks to his efforts and energy new schools have been set up and teachers' congresses have been held. Through his influence and example he has led many people, previously indifferent to the

cause of elemetary education, to become deeply involved in this work.[156]

Anna Ulyanova:

Father had no colleagues in the early years. They only appeared on the scene after he was appointed Director in 1874 and inspectors were made available to help him in his work.[157]

Valerian Nazariev:

This means that at the present time the Director and the five inspectors, despite constant and energetic work and travelling, are hardly able to carry out the work required of them ... the whole burden of which had weighed hitherto on the shoulders of Ulyanov, a weak-looking man, no longer in his first youth.[158]

Ilya Ulyanov:

In view of the consideration that statistics relating to schooling provide most valuable material both for the government and for society as a whole, ever since I took up my appointment in this field I have gone out of my way to ensure that these statistics were made public in good time. Every year I published reports on the state of elementary education in the gubernia....

After surveying the above material the following conclusions can be drawn: (1) although the number of schools has, over the last ten years, been reduced by 37 (the total number of elementary schools in the gubernia in 1879 was 425—*Ed.*), this stems entirely

from the fact that some very small schools, for the most part quite inadequately equipped and funded, have been merged with schools that were far better organised and possessed fairly suitable buildings; (2) the number of pupils of both sexes has increased by 43 per cent during the period under review...; (3) the number of pupils who complete the whole elementary course has been increasing each year since 1875...; (4) the number of properly trained teachers is growing each year; (5) teachers' salaries have on average tripled; (6) the number of suitable school buildings has increased by 150....

These figures should naturally be regarded as encouraging, although there is room for more understanding of the needs of elementary education on the part of the population of our gubernia.[159]

K. M. Ammosov:

The services of Ilya Nikolayevich also received due recognition from the authorities who saw fit to confer upon him the following outstanding decorations: in 1877 he was graciously awarded the rank of Full Councillor of State; on January 1, 1882 he was awarded the Order of St. Vladimir (Third Class), and on January 1, 1886 he was awarded the Order of St. Stanislav (First Class).[160]

* * *

The first six months in the new post flew past very quickly. Ilya Nikolayevich was soon able to assess the situation he had inherited

from his predecessor and after that he set down to work. On Thursday April 9, 1870, he was already writing an article for the *Simbirsk Gubernia Gazette*, which reported on the state of the local elementary schools.

From time to time Ilya Nikolayevich would get up from his desk and go and see how his wife Maria Alexandrovna was feeling, for her condition at that time gave him cause for worry. Then again he would settle down to work on his article, to read through the proofs, since the first part was due to be published in the next issue of the *Gazette* due to come out on Saturday. How would the readers react to what he had written? He had complained about the weaknesses of local teaching practices and pointed to the shortage of adequate school buildings.... He was of the opinion that it would be advisable to abandon the practice of making pupils kneel in the corner as a purely physical form of punishment, and where possible to introduce methods designed to bring moral influence to bear upon the pupils.... Schools were usually housed either in the houses of priests of those employed by the parish, or in peasant houses, or in church guard-rooms, that were sometimes damp and cold....

In the village of Khodary, near the modern school building, there is still to be found the log house with three windows, a tiny hall and a single room which served as the schoolhouse at the time of Lenin's father. Possibly it was that very same guard-room which Ilya Nikolayevich had in mind when he wrote in his article: "...Despite all the diligence and

skill of the teachers and enthusiasm on the part of the pupils, it is impossible to expect any good to come of the schooling provided here."[161]

It is difficult for the reader of today to imagine the church guard-room, which served as the school for the peasant children. That bare shell of a building with its three little windows—hard though it may be to believe it—was one of the elementary schools which came into being while Ulyanov was in charge. Not only did he take a direct interest in it, he was proud of it. The memorial-plaque fixed on the wall of the former school building bears witness to the fact that Ulyanov opened it in 1870.

Thanks to the efforts of Ilya Nikolayevich larger buildings were also erected, as for example the spacious two-storeyed premises in the village of Zhadovka and elsewhere, which not only are still standing today but which are used for the same purpose now as then. Yet let us dwell on the way in which the inspector succeeded in providing this one particular school, modest in the extreme, in the village of Khodary, which was a long way from Simbirsk. Then it will be easier to evaluate what Ilya Nikolayevich achieved and give him due credit. When summing up what he had accomplished in ten years Ilya Nikolayevich reported that there had been an increase of 150 comfortable school premises during that period. To understand the work this involved, it is necessary to grasp the essential nature of those times, to feel what they were like and to put ourselves in the po-

sition of the people living then. Otherwise we may find ourselves in the ridiculous position Goncharov[162] warned us against—we may start wondering why people in the eighteenth century did not wear tail-coats instead of waistcoats with lace cuffs, and even why they did not travel by train....

When it came to the question of a school in Khodary, the main task was to provide some kind of schooling for the children in that Chuvash locality. Krupskaya recalls that Ilya Nikolayevich paid particular attention to providing instruction for the numerous "aliens", as they were then known, residing in Simbirsk Gubernia.[163]

Ilya Nikolayevich went to a parish assembly in Khodary, at which he tried to persuade the local elders that it was important to teach children how to read and write. He succeeded, and subsequently one of the peasants was to recall: "There was a man sitting next to the village elder, Trofim Karpovich [Spiridonov], with a broad bald patch and shining buttons on his uniform. He had a friendly smile and bade the elders sit down. That had been, as later announced by the elder, the inspector of elementary schools, Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov. He spoke about education for the people, about schools, the Chuvash people, who were virtually all illiterate and ignorant. He said that the children needed to be taught to read and write and that for this reason a school ought to be opened. He told us that the Minister had given us permission to open a school in this village. The peasants liked very much what he had to say and they agreed to

open a school, but there was no building to house it."

The first step had been taken, and the village elder Spiridonov, who but a short time before had had doubts as to whether an elementary school was really needed in Khodary, was now on Ulyanov's side.

—"You've persuaded us, Ilya Nikolayevich, you've brought round even the most stubborn of us. We just can't let our children never learn to read and write. What you said about teaching children from the Chuvash and other peoples not speaking Russian was very wise. Now the best thing would be to write down the decision of the parish assembly...."

—"Let's do that, Trofim Karpovich, we'll draw up that decision straight away.... We, the undersigned, at an assembly attended by the whole parish, have drawn up in writing our decision that we are willing to allocate free of charge premises in the public building already standing in Khodary and known as the assembly house to be used as an elementary school in Khodary for non-Russian children...."

Spiridonov approved and reminded the inspector: "You must note down straignt away that the heating will also be provided by the village. The log-house itself is comfortable and there is a room for the teacher to live in. The room in the log-house that will be used as a school gives you plenty of space."

The first teacher who came to Khodary—Rozhdestvensky by name—taught and lived in one room of the assembly house. Even those premises were only granted him for a

single winter. Rozhdestvensky's work, meanwhile, was proceeding well. On one occasion, after a visit to some of his lessons, Ilya Nikolayevich noted: "A very good relationship has been established between master and pupils: the boys look at him happily and they answer his questions keenly. His charges have mastered the basic elements of geography and are able to draw a map of the world and to read aloud with a fair degree of accuracy. They give detailed answers when questions are put to them. The Chuvash children read quite well in Russian."

It was clear by now that Khodary would simply have to have a proper school building. Again the parish assembly would have to be won round. The inspector would have to prevail upon the elder.

—"But where do we go from here, Trofim Karpovich?" Ulyanov began when he made his next visit to that village. "Is it right that in the same room where the children work, the teacher cooks his dinner and sleeps?"

—"That room, as I said before, gives you plenty of space. Let him put a curtain up and live behind it."

—"No. If I'm ever going to persuade you to do anything, it should be that we must put up a special building for the elementary school."

—"Where are we going to get the money for a whole building from?"

—"We shall have to apply to the Ministry for it, and go and worry your uyezd council as well."

—"Very well then," the village elder replied

more calmly, "but as soon as you start asking for money we shall have to work all out in advance how much we need."

—"I shall draw up an estimate," Ilya Nikolayevich assured him.

—"Very well then.... I suppose, we'll take the timber from the Sursky Forest. Who'll make the thirty-mile journey there?"

—"I shall," replied Ulyanov with the same patient voice.

—"Very well then.... But once work starts on the house, we'll have to watch it like a hawk—where do we get the time?"

—"I'll be taking care of that...."

—"Very well then.... Even so, Ilya Nikolayevich, you might just have one last look at the assembly house...."

—"What for?"

—"I still say that the room gives you plenty of space. There really isn't any reason to start building a new school...."

A great deal of patience was needed, and still more time and effort to draw up the estimates, to use all possible means available to obtain the funds required, to make the journey to the Sursky Forest, to agree on prices for logs and planks, and to keep a constant check on the building work going on in Khodary so as to be sure that nothing was overlooked.

That was just one school, and altogether Ulyanov had over four hundred in his charge. Nor was Simbirsk Gubernia something you could ride round in a day—almost 45,000 square versts (28,810.5 square miles) of it. The inspector of its elementary schools used

to travel the length and breadth of it: neither the autumn mud nor the snowstorms used to hold Ulyanov back. In the summer he would bounce along in a springless carriage, the very thought of which would make a man feel he was being turned inside out, and in the winter he would struggle through the snowdrifts on a sledge.

The then well-known writer on contemporary social and political issues, Nazariev, a landowner of Simbirsk Uyezd already referred to in connection with Ulyanov, made several references to Ulyanov's tireless work. These are to be found in such sketches as "A Modern Backwater", "Spring Shoots", published in *Vestnik Yevropy*, the *Simbirsk Gubernia Gazette* and the *Simbirsk Zemstvo News*.

Nazariev recalled how he would be sitting in a warm room, book in hand, listening anxiously to the relentless howl of a snowstorm whirling across the wide open steppe, which had been keeping the peasants housebound for three days on end. Suddenly a sleigh-bell would ring outside the window and Nazariev would hurry out to meet his unexpected visitor.

—"Don't be surprised, Valerian Nikanorovich. I'll thaw out in a moment and then I'll take my coat off and you'll recognise Ulyanov, your obedient servant. I've been on my rounds for over three weeks now."

There before Nazariev stood the Inspector of Elementary Schools all covered in snow, with icicles in his side-whiskers and a face blue with cold.

—"Ilya Nikolayevich, merciful heaven. What a wonderful suprise! We'll soon have the wanderer warm and comfortable."

Everyone would start bustling about to welcome the visitor. Ulyanov, meanwhile, would be walking up and down the room, to get the circulation back into his legs numb with cold, and he would bring the conversation round to school affairs, to his hopes and fears. He would continue to discuss such things, Nazariev informs us, while they drank tea, during dinner and all through the evening. He himself might be feeling drowsy but the inspector would still be talking about schools. The first words which Nazariev would be greeted with the next morning would also be about SCHOOLS....

Nazariev was to write about Ilya Nikolayevich: "He was one of those unsung toilers who never progressed beyond a modest office and a miserable salary only just adequate to feed his family." As for Ulyanov's work in education, this filled Nazariev with admiration: "Like a carefree bird in the sky he never used to think about anything domestic or worldly: that he would leave entirely to his wife. He would never lose heart or complain: without a murmur he would continue to gallop across the gubernia leaving his family for months on end, he would go hungry, suffer from stale air in assembly houses, risk his life time and time again, and put himself out at Zemstvo meetings or parish assemblies in villages that were prosperous marketing centres, among crowds of indifferent tight-fisted peasants, soliciting for petty sums. He would

comfort downhearted teachers or school-mistresses who had dissolved in tears and then, as soon as he returned at last to Simbirsk, it would only be to run to the teachers' courses being held there. Despite all the bad organisation that surrounded him, despite his constant physical and mental exhaustion, and the constant wars he had to wage with the corpulent and sneering village elders, clerks, and roguish contractors, Ulyanov succeeded not only in keeping bright the flame entrusted to him, but also, despite impossible odds, in founding no less than 45 village schools in our uyezd alone, where previously they had only existed on paper...."[164]

Is that not admirably written? At the same time Nazariev informs us that he kept strictly to the truth and factual details, avoiding any sort of exaggeration or undue praise. Nevertheless Ulyanov's eldest daughter, Anna Ilyinichna, objected to what Nazariev used to write. Why should that have been? Surely Nazariev had written his accounts with nothing but the noblest of intentions?

The urge to pay homage where it is due even to an individual we hold dear, and the wish to tell of the tribulations he voluntarily took upon himself and to sympathise with his rigorous lot should be held in check and not exceed the clearly defined limits of proper moderation. Once such limits have been exceeded, albeit subconsciously, a writer begins to betray the truth and even the intentions of his hero. Such writing reveals more about the writer than his subject: when he inflates the hardships which a committed hero undergoes

and enthuses over his disregard for all life's comforts, the narrator makes it clear above all that he himself has never had to endure any such hardship.

Nevertheless the temptation to place the hero on a pedestal, depicting him as overcoming such setbacks as, for instance, having to work in bitter frosts, or hardly having two pennies to rub together, or at least as travelling along impassable roads, is a very great one. Were the obstacles on a hero's path to his goal really so great, did he suffer from all this or did he just pay no attention, absorbed as he was in his work? The decision more often than not depends upon the author himself, on his views and his own habits.

What Anna Ulyanova appears to have found insufferable is that ingratiating, deliberately lofty tone in which Nazariev wrote about the inspector of elementary schools. She saw it as completely incompatible with her image of Ilya Nikolayevich, a man who quite deliberately went about the execution of his duty, acutely conscious of all that it involved. She addressed the following words to Nazariev in this connection: "It is important to remember that this image of Ilya Nikolayevich, while correct in the basic details, nevertheless has been written by a man who was a professional writer, who cannot help but exaggerate in his efforts to create striking characters and achieve a polished style...."

That however was only half the problem. Far more important was the difference between the views on education, and role of a

liberal landowner sincerely welcoming progress in the field, and those of an intellectual of humble origins actively working to provide education. It was that difference which concerned Anna Ilyinichna above all else. She was to write that this description of her father had been written by "a landowner, for whom neglecting comfort and the amenities of life would have been tantamount to starvation and the risk of his life".[165]

Ilya Nikolayevich, for his part, had known material difficulties ever since he could remember. He could remember going hungry and the struggle to find somewhere to live as a student. Now that he was inspector of elementary schools he carried out his duties without considering himself as deserving of pity in any way. With regard, for example, to the frequent travelling his work involved and the many different tasks he was called upon to perform, these Ulyanov probably saw as the unavoidable price that had to be paid if he was to be able to achieve his purpose—that of being useful to ordinary men and women and setting them free from darkness and ignorance. That would probably have been the thing Nazariev found hardest to understand, for he never ceased to marvel that Ulyanov "would never lose heart or complain".[166]

In the account given by Valerian Nazariev of the work carried out by the Inspector of Elementary Schools, what stood out for Anna Ulyanova was the "contrast between the young gentleman, the sybarite occasionally carried away by fine ideas and words, and the

intellectual from a humble background, a man who worked for and was totally committed to a principle, devotion to which went hand in hand with wholehearted effort in the name of that ideal".[167]

We must assume that Ilya Nikolayevich's views on the vocation of Russian intellectuals coincided very closely with the convictions of his wife's niece, Anna Veretennikova, one of the country's first woman doctors. Her decision to set out straight out from St. Petersburg to a remote village lost in the middle of the steppe (Buzdayk, Belebei Uyezd) was to bring the young woman many harrowing experiences. The world awaiting her was one in which there were no educated people who shared her interests. Then there were the long distances to travel, since her practice embraced 185 villages. There were also the difficult living conditions: she managed to rent half a log-house in which she both lived and received her patients. Finally there was the inadequate salary, which was paid at most irregular intervals by the Zemstvo. "In general, although my salary of 1,500 roubles a year was quite a sizeable one, it was barely enough, despite my modest life, because I used to spend more than half of it on purchasing medicines and bandages, and on the care of patients after surgery, patients whom I had to look after in my own quarters or in premises I used to rent out for them."

After a detailed picture of her life as a country doctor, Veretennikova concluded in the following vein: "Those desirous of comfort would probably have found such a life

terrible. Yet engrossed as I was in the tide of new impressions flooding into my life and the ceaseless bustling to and fro that lasted from dawn till dusk, I did not notice any of the inconveniences and used to pay no attention to them. I had not time to think about them: my new life swept me along with it. The swarm of new impressions, thoughts and observations, which I hardly had time to think through and analyse, held me captive.

"At that time I was really living life to the full, with every fibre of my being, as never before or since."

Ulyanov in his turn used to delight in every new village school. Although the progress might have been slower than he would have wished for, nevertheless there was progress to be seen: more and more peasant children were now coming to grips with the alphabet and learning to read. The work was under way and that was enough to make him happy.

...Almost half a century later, at the time of the armed uprising in Petrograd, when night seemed to run into day and day into night for all the revolutionary leaders and for Lenin all the more so, Krupskaya was to comment: "I did not recognise [Vladimir] Ilyich. He had been waiting for those days for such a long time.... In those grim, but at the same time thrilling and happy days a marked change seemed to come over him. His face seemed to light up, it was happy and inspired...."[168] The work was under way and that was enough to make him happy.... Those close to the Ulyanov noticed that it was not only his face and build that were like his

father's, but his character and his habits as well—even his quick temper. His sister Maria was to write: "Strength of will, energy, the ability to devote himself heart and soul to the task in hand, often to the detriment of his health, an extremely conscientious approach to his duties as well as a high level of democratism and a considerate attitudes to other people—these traits of character were ones which Ilya Nikolayevich and Vladimir Ilyich had in common...."[169]

...Meanwhile, to go back to the beginning, an April night in 1870 was dragging on, as Ulyanov, Inspector of Elementary Schools, was working away on his first article giving a report of what had been accomplished in the gubernia so far.

When it was almost morning, Ilya Nikolayevich, after looking at Maria Alexandrovna, decided it was time to call the midwife. On the next day, April 10th (old style), a son was born to the Ulyanovs.

The *Simbirsk Gubernia Gazette* announced: "On Friday, April 10, 1870 the ice on the Volga broke." The same day the newspaper printed an announcement from St. Petersburg to the effect that "The waters of the Neva could be seen flowing past the Winter Palace, the edge of the ice sheets now near the Senate building."

On that particular day the newspapers were concerned first and foremost with Tsar Alexander II's hunting expedition: "His Imperial Majesty and Grand Prince Vladimir Alexandrovich left St. Petersburg at 10 a.m. and arrived at the scene of the hunt at 12:25 p.m. The

hunt was successful: two bears were killed, one was shot by His Majesty and the other by the Grand Prince."

The bear shot by the tsar lay under his boot, as did the whole of Russia.... "While I am alive, Chernyshevsky shall not leave Siberia..." he had vowed.

Yet Alexander Solovyov was already prepared to lay down his life for the liberation of his people, and Andrei Zhelyabov was busy propagating socialist ideas. Stepan Khalturin and Ignaty Grinevitsky had begun distributing illegal literature, and Sofia Perovskaya, after breaking off relations with her father, had turned her back on her family and her home for ever.

Before long—after a mere nine years—the Executive Committee of the Narodnaya Volya would have passed a death sentence on Alexander II. The successful hunter would himself have become hunters' prey.

...In April 1870 in the parish register of the Church of St. Nicholas, the eighth entry for that month reads as follows: "Vladimir was born on the 10th day of April and christened on the 16th of the month. His parents are Collegiate Councillor Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov and his legally wedded wife, Maria Alexandrovna, both members of the Russian Ortodox Church."

HOW THEY LIVED

After moving from one rented flat to another six times, the Ulyanovs took up residence in

Moskovskaya Street—in a house of their own. Ilya Nikolayevich was by this time Director of Elementary Schools and he had been promoted to the rank of Full Councillor of State (the civil service rank equivalent to that of general in the army in tsarist Russia); however, a few years passed after that promotion before he put together the necessary sum to purchase a house. It was the first and last piece of real estate in the life of Ilya Nikolayevich. Moreover the transaction had been carried out in the name of Maria Alexandrovna, his wife....

The family moved into the house and settled there with no house-warming celebrations as is the practice nowadays: happy days were to follow. Ilya Nikolayevich used to say that none of his children gave him grounds for concern. He used to divide the six up into three pairs, each one consisting of a boy and a girl. The first pair—Alexander and Anna—would, according to their father, turn out very well in the future. The second pair—Vladimir and Olga—would, or so it seemed to Ilya Nikolayevich, turn out even better than the first and accomplish still more. The third pair—Dmitri and Maria—were also quite able, but not even in jest did their father venture to guess how they might turn out.

In every family some children are quieter and others more mischievous. The most sprightly pair in this family was the middle one—Vladimir and Olga. When they grew excited they might do things like throwing the galoshes from the hall onto the settee in the drawing room. That was no great disaster of

course, but neither was it something to be encouraged. Maria Alexandrovna would lead the guilty party through into Father' study and sit the child down on the black-leather armchair to remain there until he or she had calmed down. That punishment was referred to in the family as—Black Armchair. On one occasion Maria Alexandrovna had led Vladimir through into his father's study for this purpose and forgotten about him for a while. When she suddenly remembered it, she found her son fast asleep on the black armchair with a happy smile on his face. For a child tears can give way to a smile so easily, so quickly....

Such episodes soon belonged to the past and before very long Volodya too was to put on the gymnasium uniform. In the Ulyanov family, as in any other, the children were growing up and the parents getting older. As always it was happening almost without anyone noticing it, as days filled with activity and everyday concerns quickly followed on, one after another.

The children used to get up early: by seven they were all out of bed. The first task of the day was to make beds. That was the accepted pattern: the children saw to their own needs. It was the little girls' task as well to see to it that all their brothers' clothes were properly stitched and patched, when repairs were necessary.... Such a state of affairs is probably aspired to in all families, but it is usually achieved only in a few.

Vladimir used to find time in the mornings to review his home-work. Soon, though, it was time for breakfast: "Good morning,

Mamma!" Then would follow the procedure introduced by Maria Alexandrovna: one day the children would talk in Russian, the next in French and the third in German. The children did not find it easy, and it was still harder for Maria Alexandrovna to make sure the routine was not broken once it had been established.

...In the summer of 1920, speaking at the Second Congress of the Communist International, Lenin addressed the French delegates in French and the German ones in German.... So much in our life can be traced back to our childhood.... Yet that same year, when filling in a form and answering the question as to which languages, besides Russian he could speak, read or write, Lenin noted: "French, German, English: all 3 poorly".[170] The high standards Lenin set himself were something else that was rooted in his childhood experience....

Next the children would sit down at table. They were expected to eat up everything that was on their plates, avoiding all waste. That was another part of family routine. Vladimir, who did not suffer from a poor appetite, used to do this more than willingly and usually emptied his plate first. He even used to play a game relating to his appetite with his cousin, Anna Ivanovna Veretennikova, when she used to come and visit the Ulyanovs. More often than not she would be sitting talking to Ilya Nikolayevich as Vladimir came running in. He would turn to his cousin Anna, the doctor, and make a request: "Anyuta, I'm ill: make me better, please."

—"What's the matter with you?"

—"No matter how hard I try, I can't fill myself up: however much I eat, I'm still hungry."

—"Well then, go through to the kitchen, cut yourself a thick slice of rye bread, sprinkle it generously with salt and then eat it up."

—"I've tried already but it doesn't help."

—"Try that medicine again then, and it's bound to help."

So it would go on, just as in a shaggy-dog story—round and round in circles, with no beginning and no end.... How far away our childhood slips from us, in the course of time it is separated from us by far more than any mere physical distance.... The story has it that in the early years after the Revolution, when food shortages were at their worst, Lenin used to put away his statutory ration of bread in the drawer of his desk. As he worked, without looking at it, he would break off a piece or two every now and then. His wife and sister Maria managed, without him noticing, to put in an extra piece of bread now and again. Vladimir Ilyich used to eat everything that was there, not noticing that part of it was no longer his own ration. In the winter of 1919 the Managing Department of the Council of People's Commissars (CPC) issued a written instruction which read as follows: "The Chairman of the CPC, Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (Lenin) is engaged in brainwork an unlimited number of hours every day and in view of this he is entitled to use food and bread ration cards of the first category."

...That's it! All the plates are empty, at last

breakfast is over and everyone can be off to school. They are anxious to go to school!

—"But, no, wait a minute!" called Maria Alexandrovna, stopping the children in their tracks. "After drinking hot tea you ought to stay inside for another ten minutes, otherwise you'll all come down with sore throats. Then, if you fall ill, even more time will be lost."

All mothers have worries like this in common. They are anxious to protect their small children from coughs and colds, to hand down worldly wisdoms such as "More haste, less speed." Yet not every mother—indeed far from it—has the skill or strength of character that enabled Maria Alexandrovna to share the hardships on the road that her children chose, without ever reproaching a single one of them....

During childhood an elder brother can be just like a lodestar for a younger one, something that he longs to reach and sees as his cherished goal. Whenever asked what he wanted to do Vladimir would answer: the same as Sasha. As a small boy he had dreamt of joining the ranks of gymnasium pupils—like Sasha. Indeed they were there concurrently for four years: Alexander was already a senior pupil when his younger brother began his studies at the Classical Gymnasium in Simbirsk.... Ilya Nikolayevich, it is worth remembering, was not an advocate of a classical education: in his eyes it involved too much rote-learning. There was nothing to be done about it though, for the gymnasium was a stepping-stone on the way to the university and with-

out completing the gymnasium course it would be impossible to become a university student. Ilya Nikolayevich was prepared to put up with a good deal to make sure that his children should be able to study at university. He hoped very much that his sons would devote themselves to science....

For the main meal of the day the boys would come home from school. Every day they would be required to report what marks they had received. Sometimes those occasions would not be of the happiest for either parents or children.... Before going up to his room Vladimir would go past his father's study, reporting as he did so: "A for Greek, A for German and A for Algebra...."

In the course of time when he had already graduated as an external student from St. Petersburg University, Vladimir was to write to his younger sister: "You must agree that those who go all the way through with threes [mark C—*Ed.*] do not, first, do their homework and, second do not know the first thing about the subject."[171]

Ilya Nikolayevich responded in a very calm, matter-of-fact fashion to his children's marks since he never suffered from the delusion that top marks handed out in lessons constitute the apogee of all human virtues. His son's success not only pleased him but was also a source of concern: everything seemed to come too easily to Vladimir, while a real capacity for work could, in his father's eyes, only be consolidated by surmounting problems. What Ilya Nikolayevich feared most was that praise might "go to his head" and he

might develop too high an opinion of himself.

Thinking back to the atmosphere in the Ulyanov family home, Anna Ilyinichna would later write: "When I look back to our childhood, I think it would have been better if that line, that is basically correct from the educational point of view, had not been followed by the letter to quite the same rigid extent. It was just what was needed only in the case of my brother Vladimir, for it balanced out his marked self-confidence and consistently outstanding performance in school. Although it did not undermine in any way his capacity for astute self-evaluation, there is no doubt that it served to dispel any arrogance to which all children are inclined if they are constantly praised on account of their outstanding abilities: it taught him to work hard despite all the praise he received. For all the rest of us, particularly for us girls, who later suffered from a certain lack of confidence in our ability, small doses of praise would also have been useful. I remember, for example, how important it was for me when I heard via Sasha how my father had praised my first composition, for which I had been given a Distinction in school. Yet I heard about that praise by chance: Father had commented on the composition to Mother in my absence."[172]

...It is however very rare that parents form a reliable and clear picture of what the future holds for their children. They try to foster their children's capacity for work and promote diligence, but by no means always with any precise idea of what that diligence will be

spent on. The time was to come when one of Lenin's political opponents would say of him that there was no other person who could work for the revolution 24 hours a day, and who had no other thoughts but thoughts for the revolution and who even saw nothing but revolution in his dreams.... Vladimir Ilyich himself was to remark in one of the first interviews he gave after the October Revolution: "There is only one thing I dream about—to be able to take a rest, albeit for half an hour." He was not destined ever to visit the shores of the Black Sea or to see the Caucasus Mountains. Lenin's sister Maria recalled how, in 1922, Lenin, already a sick man, told her: "In 1917 I had a holiday in a hunter's cabin in Sestroretsk thanks to White Guard ensigns, and in 1918 thanks to Kaplan's bullet. After that no other occasions came along...."[173] There were to be no others until he fell ill....

As soon as they had taken of their satchels and school uniforms, the boys would hurry down to the Sviyaga River where in the winter there were ice-covered slopes and a skating rink. There would be a brass-band playing and once the evening shadows set in, lanterns would be lit and pairs would start to whirl on and on into the night—pupils from the local high schools, officers, cadets.... Vladimir would be first onto the ice. He would skim down the icy slope drawn up to his full height, although a fall from that slope, even for those coming down on a sledge, could be far more painful than a tumble for the skaters. Some of the schoolboys would join

together in a chain and weave their way across the ice in all sorts of intricate patterns.

This carefree life, however, was not to last for long: "When I was at school I began to get enthusiastic about skating but it used to make me tired: after skating I felt like going to sleep and it stopped me working, so I gave it up,"[174] Vladimir Ilyich was to tell his wife Nadezhda Konstantinovna, while they were in exile in Siberia. During that same period he wrote to his mother from the godforsaken remote village of Shushenskoye: "...now that winter has come I go skating instead of shooting, I recall the old days and find that I have not forgotten how, although it is about ten years since I last skated. Nadya also wants to learn to skate, but I am not sure whether she will manage it."[175] He was also to recall his skating days during his second period abroad as an émigré in the winter of 1913, when he wrote to his mother from Cracow: "I have bought some skates and skate with great enthusiasm—it brings back Simbirsk and Siberia."[176]

...When dusk falls, quiet descends upon the house in Moskovskaya Street. This was a family where everybody had work to do. Ilya Nikolayevich would be working in his study.

Anna was the first to complete her studies at the gymnasium. She then started work as a teacher's assistant in one of the parish schools of Simbirsk and she also used to help Olga with her studies at home. During this time she was preparing for the entrance exams for the Bestuzhev Courses[177] in St. Petersburg. Ilya

Nikolayevich's eldest daughter was inspired by the same ideals as her father—that of serving the people by imparting knowledge to them.

Alexander also would have liked to study in St. Petersburg. He dreamt of studying natural sciences in the physics and mathematics faculty of the university in the capital. For the time being he was sitting over his studies longer than all other members of the family. For one of his school essays he wrote: "For a man to be engaged in useful activity he requires: (1) honesty; (2) industry; (3) firmness of character; (4) intelligence; (5) knowledge.

"In order to be useful to society, a person needs to be honest and to have developed a capacity for hard, concentrated work and, so that his work should produce maximum results, it is imperative that a person should have intelligence and a good grounding in his subject. Honesty is an essential human quality whatever sort of activity a person is indulging in: without honesty even the work of an intelligent and diligent person will not only fail to be beneficial to society but will even do harm. An individual's honesty and correct view of his obligations with regard to the people around him can be fostered in him from his early years onwards, since it is convictions such as those which determine the kind of work he will devote himself to and whether or not, when choosing that work, he will be influenced by the thought of the good he can do for society or selfish attention to his personal advantage."

The literature teacher, Kerensky, who was

also the headmaster of the school, only gave Alexander Ulyanov a B after reading that essay and seemed to have considered it rather dry in tone. Alexander himself did not yet suspect and could not possibly have imagined that, in addition to the virtues he had picked out, he would also need a rare degree of courage.

Vladimir was also taking his studies seriously. On one of those evenings he ruled out a neat table on three pages in order to conjugate irregular French verbs. It is the only school exercise of Lenin's that has survived, as far as we know.... Although, even at that stage in his life he was already industrious, he was likely to have found that task irksome: he was probably eager to complete the task of conjugating all 64 of the verbs required!

Nor were the younger members of the family idle. Dmitri, like all little boys, was trying to turn the handle of the sewing machine. After coming across her youngest son, Maria Alexandrovna began to teach him to sew and her youngest daughter Maria to knit.

Vlamidir, the first to finish his homework, came running downstairs. Then Olga would start complaining: "Mamma, Volodya won't let me get on with my homework." The youngest children would then start whining, and sooner or later Ilya Nikolayevich would come out of his study and ask: "What's all this noise? I don't want to hear any more of it. Come on Volodya, you come and sit in my study, while Olya's still doing her homework."

Then all would be silent concentration once more.... Noisy welcomes for visitors, and

guests flocking to at-homes were not part of the family routine. Yet children's parties were regular events. The children would receive presents and in their turn would give presents to their parents. Alexander, for example, made a wooden casket, and Olga embroidered a cushion cover. Anna wrote on an envelope: "To dear Papa" and inside she placed a paper bearing the words of the poem on Simbirsk referred to earlier in this chapter,

That far-away town on the river,
Which was always too dear to forget....

All happy families resemble one another.... Perhaps that is true. One thing is surely true—that every family knows bright moments of happy harmony. The Ulyanovs enjoyed their gatherings at the supper table at the end of the working day.

Maria Alexandrovna would drop in to her husband's study and tell him that the samovar was ready.

—"I'm coming," Ilya Nikolayevich would reply. When he appeared in the dining-room he would usually say: "We all know that the busiest one of us all is Sasha. Volodya, would you go up and remind your elder brother that the samovar is not like us. It won't wait."

Ilya Nikolayevich would sit at the head of the table. Opposite him would sit Maria Alexandrovna. Volodya and Sasha would sit near their father and the younger children would be seated near their mother. Each member of the family had his set place.

After returning from his visits to various

schools in the gubernia, Ilya Nikolayevich would tell the family about life in the countryside and the elementary schools he used to visit. He would do this in a light-humoured vein, telling jokes as he went, describing many a stubborn old parish elder, or dull-witted clerk. His daughter Anna recalled: "His lively tales about triumphs in the drive to build new premises and set up new schools in the villages, about the struggle the work involved, both at the top (against landowners and other people in power) and at grass-roots level (when he was up against the ignorance and prejudices of the poor) were lapped up by his children."[178] Nor were they ever to be forgotten. Krupskaya was to mention this later on: she remembered Lenin telling her how he listened to his father's stories about his trips to the villages and about the helplessness and ignorance of the peasants.[179]

After supper the family was reluctant to disperse, particularly the younger children. They were only too anxious to stay up a little longer. As children people usually dream of growing up as quickly as possible, since they are envious of adults' privileges: one thing at any rate is certain—adults go to bed when they please. In the evenings Maria Alexandrovna used to sit down at the piano. At one time Vladimir had showed an interest in the piano too, but it had been short-lived: he had come to look upon music as something unsuitable for a boy, particularly one who already went to gymnasium.

Maria Alexandrovna used to play the piano herself or with her daughters. The music

would ripple on, quietly and gently.... It was as if the music was being rocked to sleep on the dying waves of the day that was soon to be a thing of the past.... Almost forty years later, on a similar evening, Lenin left his Kremlin office for a while to call on Gorky and listen to Beethoven sonatas being played by Isai Dobrovein. In a worried exhausted tone of a man already aware of the illness about to strike him down, Lenin pointed out wearily: "But I can't listen to music very often, it affects my nerves. I want to say silly things and pat on the heads of those who can create such beauty, although they live in a filthy hell. One can't pat anyone on the head nowadays, they might bite your hand off. They ought to be beaten on the head, beaten mercilessly, though we pursue ideals opposed to any violence against people. Hm—what a hellishly difficult job!"[180]

...In the evenings Ilya Nikolayevich used to play chess with his sons. At one stage a family magazine was compiled on Saturdays that they used to refer to as "Saturday News". Alexander was the editor, and Vladimir and Olga used to write the articles. Anna used to include her poems in it and offer critical analysis of the writings of her younger brother and sister. Both Maria Alexandrovna and Ilya Nikolayevich used to participate most actively in discussion of the various, albeit not very numerous issues of "Saturday News". They liked this enterprise undertaken by their children. Anna Ilyinichna was later to write: "I remember their animated happy faces, I remember the very special atmosphere of shared

excitement over the common task which coloured all those 'meetings'. Now, when I look back, it seems that those evenings were the highpoint of close contact for us four eldest children with our parents. What happy, joyful memories they have left behind them!"[181]

Nine-year-old Vladimir contributed articles to the "Saturday News" under the pen-name Kubyshkin, a nick-name he had been given on account of his thickset build. That was how the first of Vladimir Ulyanov's pseudonyms came into being: the first of some 160 to which he was forced to resort later on—Miryanin and William Frey, Vladimir Ilyin and Peterburzhets, N. Lenivtsyn, Potential Conciliator, Non-Deputy, Jakob Richter, Non-Liberal Sceptic, Old Fellow and Company, not to mention the pseudonym we all know—Lenin....

All the family would collect together on long winter evenings and then someone would always read aloud: a fine custom practised by the Russian intelligentsia in the last century that seems surprising to us nowadays. It was a custom providing opportunities for a family to acquaint itself—in its own special way—with the works of those whose thoughts ennoble us and whose writings gladden the heart.

The Ulyanov family liked very much, for example, the works of the French astronomer and writer Camille Flammarion. His *Astronomie populaire*, which appeared in Paris in the late 1870s, was soon translated into Russian and proved a major event for the whole

of the reading public. The Ulyanovs are bound to have studied the large map of the heavens published by Flammarion, on which were charted all the stars visible with the naked eye, and to have compared it with the night sky over the Volga.

...Distant stars and far-away galaxies always set men thinking about life on this Earth. What is happening on this Earth always makes more of an impact than anything imaginary. Soon after the victorious armed uprising, Vladimir Ilyich was to look out of the window of the Smolny Institute into the clear frosty sky over Petrograd and muse: "Stars, just look at those stars! The frost must be biting harder.... In my youth I used to know all the different constellations very well, but now I'm beginning to forget. There's no time...."[182]

To study the sky we need first to study the Earth: that was the advice Camille Flammarion gave in his book about the heavenly bodies....

Once again the sheets of ice on the Volga were breaking up one by one as they piled against each other. Streams were once more carving out a path for themselves, rippling ever more merrily on their way down over the Simbirsk hill, wearing thin the carpet of snow. It was April again. Spring had come. The chain of happy days was not to last much longer.

Lucky is the house which has a garden round it, where the family can spend many hours once the warm weather sets in. A garden is another centre of shared activity. In the

mornings Maria Alexandrovna herself would water the flowers, but keeping the tubs filled to the brim with water was the boys' task. Watering vegetables was a task that everyone shared, using buckets, watering-cans and jugs—according to how much each one could carry.

Alexander was becoming more and more interested in chemistry. So as not to annoy the family with his experiments, he fixed himself up a laboratory in the kitchen of the side-wing looking onto the yard. He used to buy his apparatus out of his own money, which he made by giving lessons.

Ilya Nikolayevich used to say in jest: "He lives like a philosopher in an empty kitchen."

Vladimir did not visit him there often. He used to try and emulate Sasha in everything, but natural sciences did not really inspire him. Nor did he enjoy wood-carving as Alexander did. He preferred to read or play with his sister Olga, especially in the old coach-house, which the former owners of the house had built, having obviously possessed their own carriage. After some circus performers and tight-rope walkers had visited Simbirsk, Vladimir and Olga fixed up a rope in the shed. Then they would try to balance on the rope, holding a pole and making sure to rub the soles of their shoes with chalk.

The children loved eating garden produce. Yet Maria Alexandrovna had introduced strict rules, where such things were concerned. The only apples the children were allowed to take were those that had fallen on the ground. The rest were to be used for jam to be eaten dur-

ing the winter. Special rows in the strawberry patch were set aside for the children, but they were not allowed to touch the rest. Nor were they allowed to touch the three cherry trees until July 20th, Ilya Nikolayevich's name-day. It was better for them to give those trees a really wide berth, for the temptation was a great one.

...Many years later, after she had collected together Lenin's letters to his family for publication, Maria Ilyinichna wrote in the preface: "Characteristic of Vladimir Ilyich were his great punctuality and thoroughness and his strict economy in spending money, especially on himself. Vladimir Ilyich probably inherited these qualities from our mother, whom he resembled in many ways."[183]

The first letter written by Lenin, which has survived and which opens the volume *Letters to Relatives*, is dated 1893. Having already embarked on the path of a professional revolutionary, Lenin arrives in St. Petersburg. It is his first experience of life far from his family, and a month later he writes to his mother: "I am now, for the first time in St. Petersburg, keeping an account-book to see how much I actually spend." After totalling his expenditure and subtracting the outlays on items "that do not have to be bought every month (galoshes, clothes, books, an abacus, etc.)" he concludes: "the expenditure is still excessive—38 rubles a month. Obviously I have not been living carefully: in one month I have spent a ruble and 36 kopeks on the horse trams, for instance. When I get used to the place I shall probably spend less."[184]

...In the garden next to the house the Ulyanovs would play croquet, the whole family joining in and chanting Ilya Nikolayevich's favourite exhortation to the effect that the first ball should be sent into the uyezd, and the other one should be pushed further out into the gubernia.

In the summer they used to take tea outside—usually in the arbour. Alexander would carry out the heavy samovar, younger children would lay the table. After the family had taken tea, the girls would wash up and the boys would carry everything back into the house. The parents were thus able to relax.

Before the winter was over, letters would start being written and discussions take place about the summer trip to Kokushkino. It seemed to the children that it was at the far end of the earth. Kokushkino was a small property near Kazan which Maria Alexandrovna's father, the country doctor Alexander Dmitriyevich Blank, had purchased and which he had later left to his five daughters.

Olga Ulyanova left us an account of one of these family journeys from Simbirsk to Kokushkino. Even in those days—over a hundred years ago—it was customary for children to write compositions about the way they had spent the summer.

It read as follows: "In June we set off for a village over 26 miles from Kazan. We travelled down the Volga on a steamer as far as Kazan. The weather was beautiful, without a cloud in the sky: the summer sun, high above us, was shedding its bright light on the boundless expanse of water below, and in

places the reflection of the sun on the water was so bright that it hurt your eyes. Everything roundabout was quiet and almost unearthly. A fresh breeze made the heat of the day easier to bear and it was not at all hot on the steamer. I spent almost the whole journey on deck, admiring the banks of the Volga, which are particularly picturesque near Bogorodsk. I was so struck by the shining waters of the Volga flowing gently on their way, the beautiful river banks and the quick pace of the steamer, that I did not want to say goodbye to it all when we arrived in Kazan. In Kazan we had to spend two days waiting for the horses that were being sent for us.... On the third day we set off to the village.... The weather there was good all the time and we went for many walks through the fields and woods."[185]

In Kokushkino everything was shabby: the floor-boards squeaked, the stoves smoked and the roof leaked. Yet life there was unusually happy, carefree, full of simple country delights.

The balcony door, that creaks all the time,
Opens on trees of lilac and lime,
The arch of the heavens' deep blue dome
And the sleepy villages of home.[186]

The village near the Blanks' house was just as shabby and dilapidated. Everyone there still remembered Maria Alexandrovna from her childhood and youth, and they still used to call her Masha. She had married later than all the other Blank daughters and had spent

more time than all the others in Kokushkino. Ilya Nikolayevich enjoyed talking to the peasants. The children used to play together with the peasants' children.

After Vladimir had been the first to admit that he was as hungry as a hunter, the children, who were all hungry by then, would take a piece of bread with them and set off to the next gully, where raspberries and gooseberries grew in abundance. Life at Kokushkino was so carefree: the children had been able to leave their school uniforms behind them, forget about textbooks and lessons, and could now just run about and play, have fun and enjoy themselves from dawn till dusk without having to worry about anything.

For days on end they would be off to the river: they would dive in from the roof of the bath-house, learn to float motionless in the water, and race each other across to the opposite bank. Even when shivering and blue from cold, they would still go back into the water.... After taking the hoop off an old barrel Vladimir tried to make a bow out of it. Another time, when he heard that the elder children were going to camp out for the night, he did his best to persuade them to take him along too. "I'll chop wood for you, make the camp-fire, but please take me...." One day the children made an enormous kite, and went out into the meadow to fly it....

Those who saw those children on the river bank, in the woods and on the green lawn over a hundred years ago did not know, and indeed could not have known, what the

future held for them, just as we are unable to predict what lies ahead for the children we encounter nowadays. Only time would tell. Later the companions in those far-away games, peasants from Kokushkino, were to write to Lenin in the Kremlin: "Greetings from the old-timers who remember you and know you well from the games of knucklebones and catch we used to play and the nights we spent out in the forest with the horses."[187]

Maria Alexandrovna and Ilya Nikolayevich used to go for walks in the nearby countryside. Yielding to his wife's insistent requests, Ulya Nikolayevich, who caught cold so easily, would take along a rug or overcoat which he would refer to morosely as "layers". More frequently they would collect the children together and set off in a large group to pick berries. "Pick the berries sweet and mild, don't lose sight of a little child," Ilya Nikolayevich used to chant laughingly. They even went into the woods sometimes, taking their samovar with them. They would bring it to the edge of the wood on a cart, together with other provisions. Then the picnic would begin and someone would lay a fire. After raking the glowing coals together, the children would use them to cover over and bake potatoes. At the edge of the wood there would be wild apples to pick as well, even though they would prove inedible whether eaten fresh or baked....

For outsiders this would have seemed a happy, prosperous and secure family. Anna Ilyinichna was to write: "Our family was a

friendly, close-knit one. We lived very modestly ... yet the children did not want for anything as far as essentials were concerned.... The childhood of Vladimir Ilyich and his brothers and sisters was radiant and happy."[188]

Yet the question that is harder and harder to avoid and that becomes more and more insistent and disturbing is: why should it be precisely from this family that all the children should have embraced the revolutionary cause? Ilya Nikolayevich was a civil servant by profession, an educator as far as his convictions were concerned, and a teacher by vocation. Since he himself was not a revolutionary, it might well be assumed that he would also have sought to discourage his children from embarking on this path. What might explain it? Why should this divergence occur in a family where ties were so close and all were bound together by mutual respect and love?

These questions have been raised many times and have been asked by many different people, who turn to the time the Ulyanovs spent in Simbirsk, when the convictions of the elder children—Anna, Alexander and Vladimir—were taking shape and they were deciding to take part in the emancipation of their people.

Perhaps the answer will be clearer if we do not confine our search to the family circle? After all the family cannot provide an explanation for everything. Say, in the Simbirsk of time the several people were living under political surveillance. Were Alexander and, later, Vladimir in contact with them? Anna Ilyi-

nichna rejected such assumptions made by would-be researchers, anxious at any price to find such links: after all she had been their elder sister and had been privy to almost every aspect of the boys' life in Simbirsk. She pointed out: "Alexander and Vladimir were very young at the time: they both completed their studies at the gymnasium at the age of 17." She went on to stress that: "Ilya Nikolayevich being in charge of a large department of the gubernia's education service, was of course unable to maintain an acquaintance with those under surveillance if he wished to remain in his post, and, as has been pointed out earlier, the whole meaning of his life was centred in his work."[189]

In Simbirsk there was a circle for workers' self-education, and in the mid-eighties it was run by a young man who had been a fellow-pupil of Alexander's in the junior classes of the gymnasium and a former neighbour of his. He himself used to print and distribute illegal literature. The Ulyanov brothers also were familiar with various illegal publications. They probably knew about the ferment of new ideas among the pupils from the gymnasium, but neither of them, insisted Anna Ilyinichna, was a member of any political circle while still a pupil at the gymnasium.

While on the subject of the gymnasium, it can be assumed that the teaching there may to some extent have served to develop the boys' political views. The first person who would probably try to refute such assumptions was the headmaster himself, Kerensky. Year in, year out he stressed in his reports on

the school's progress: "Our attention was concentrated on fostering in our pupils religious awareness and keeping them well away from bad company, on promoting readiness to obey those in charge and respect for their elders, encouraging decorous behaviour, modesty and respect for other people's property." These principles were not just listed for appearances' sake but reflected the actual state of affairs found in the school. Strict supervision was maintained over all gymnasiums, and all the teaching that went on inside them was aimed, in accordance with the design of those responsible for the syllabus, "to promote sober thoughts in the young men of today so that they might not be infected by modern free-thinking either in relation to religion or politics."

The drudgery of the gymnasium, with its strict discipline and unimaginative rote-learning, was something that Alexander found very hard to bear. He was ecstatic when he finally completed his course of study at that institution. In response to Alexander's insistent requests, his parents decided not to send Vladimir to the preparatory class, but instead to prepare him for the entrance exams at home.

Vladimir did not look back to his days at the Simbirsk Gymnasium with any particular pleasure either. He commented that the teachers did not command the pupils' respect: "Some of them made much of the fact that they succeeded in compelling pupils to grind away at their lessons, while others had a very casual approach to their teaching work." The

following words from Anna Ilyinichna's pen provide a fitting conclusion on this particular subject: "The gymnasium did not influence Vladimir Ilyich in any way as regards inspiring him with social ideals."[190] She also points out that "his interest in social questions was nourished through conversation within his own circle of friends: according to the reminiscences of his class-mates he used to play first violin in such gatherings, as should have been the case, and he did not come under anyone's influence." Yet the questions with which we began still remain: why did the children of the educator Ulyanov become revolutionaries—all and every one?

It was approximately at that time that Fyodor Dostoyevsky[191] was to write in his diary: "People always say that reality is tedious and monotonous and that for entertainment man needs to turn to art, to fantasy and to read novels. I ask, on the contrary, what can be more amazing and unexpected than reality? What can even be more improbable sometimes than reality?"[192] That is indeed the case. Yet it should also be noted that the future appears all the more unexpected when our view of the present is a superficial one.

So let us turn once more to the Ulyanov family and look at what Pisarev[193] used to refer to as its mental physiognomy.

Harmony, mutual love and affection are all very important. Yet there is something even more significant, something which determines both the current situation within a family and how it develops in the future.

It is not enough to imagine to ourselves how the Ulyanovs lived, we need to understand the ideals and principles they lived by. Then many things will cease to appear unexpected. The children constantly had before them the example of their father "who with great tenacity and determination devoted all his energies to the thing he held most dear—his life-work—the education of the slaves of yesterday, elementary education for the people,"[194] as Ilya Nikolayevich's youngest daughter was later to remind us.

While on holiday in Kokushkino, as he walked through the fields with his children, Ilya Nikolayevich liked to sing the poems of his youth set to music:

In spirit, brothers, we are one,
Both believing the time will come.
Till the grave we shall never forgive
The scourges of Russia, our native land.[195]

The children did not, of course, know that those lines had been banned by the censor and that they came from the pen of the poet and member of the Petrashevsky circle[196] Alexei Nikolayevich Pleshcheyev.[197] It is highly likely that Ilya Nikolayevich himself did not know that, since for many years there was controversy as to whether they had been written by Ryleyev[198] or the critic Dobrolyubov.[199] Nor, probably, did he know that the first line he sang as he remembered was in one respect different from the original, which contained the word "heart" instead of spirit. Yet what the children could under-

stand, see and feel was that their father put a great deal into that song: it reverberated with pain, bitterness and sadness. They used to ask Ilya Nikolayevich to sing it again for them and they in their turn would join in:

With love for sacred truth your heart is filled,
As it beats within me, this I know:
I know its response shall never be stilled
To my brave honest voice, wherever I go.

...Towards the end of his life Ilya Nikolayevich would also sing about his youth—about that time of radiant hope, the years of his brave impatience to accomplish his goals, the time of great expectations. He would sing in the mood of a soldier returning from the front line, recalling that precious brotherhood of past battles which can never be repeated....

Documents and Eyewitnesses Testify

ONE MORE STEP OUTSIDE THE LAW....

Ye sowers of knowledge on Russia's rich soil!
Say, why so mean are the fruits of your toil,
Scanty and meagre the yield?
Use you poor seeds? Lack you muscle or skill?
Have you no spirit? Or is't that you till
Barren and desolate fields?

"To Sowers" by
Nikolai Nekrasov[200]

V. G. Korolenko:

I still remember, although I was only a child at the time, the exhilarating excitement of those first years after the emancipation of the serfs, a time that gripped all men and women who had a social conscience. It lasted through the 1860s and the early 1870s. Yet it soon became clear that Alexander II was a man far less noble than the work he had begun and very soon he betrayed the cause. By the end of the seventies all that was left of the young tsar who had made speeches about emancipation was a pathetic, repentant, and frightened reactionary who appealed from the lofty heights of his throne: "Householders, beware of your servants."[201]

From a rescript by Alexander II to the Minister for Public Education Count D. A. Tolstoy, December 25, 1873:

Count Dmitri Andreyevich: Being constantly concerned as to the welfare of my people I pay particular attention to the cause of public education....

As the person singled out by my trust to implement my designs in the sphere of public education, you shall display still more prominently that zeal which has always distinguished your work, to uphold and defend against any undermining influence those principles which should provide the cornerstone of public education—faith, morality, civic duty and a thorough attitude to learning.

N. F. Bunakov:

Elementary schools, regardless of the dura-

tion of the tuition they provide, cannot and should not limit their activity merely to teaching children from among the masses to read and write and to master a few practical skills. If their activity is circumscribed to this extent they cannot achieve their goal, that of introducing as many as possible humane principles to the life of the masses and gradually extending the range of people living a rational, intelligent life in humane conditions.

A. D. Pazukhin:

The teachers in our elementary schools have set themselves the task of broadening the mental horizons of peasant children by imparting to them a good deal of elementary information in all spheres of knowledge, while leaving only a negligible number of lessons available for instruction in the basis of religious faith. This preference accorded to the gleaning of information on an encyclopaedic scale, as opposed to work to enhance pupils' moral and religious attitudes, cannot fail to influence their way of thinking. Thirteen-year-old boys leave our schools ... with a false view of themselves as intellectually vastly superior to their parents.... Young people of peasant stock who do not respect their parents will also lose respect for the authorities.

I. N. Ulyanov:

Who does not need to know the land in which he was born, or the language which he speaks? Who does not need to understand the riches of the world, of which he constitutes

a thinking part, and finally, many other things which it is also essential for a man to know if he is to be entitled to bear the name MAN?

From the minutes of a meeting of the Committee of Ministers. June 1879:

Adjutants General Greig [Minister of Finance.—*Ed.*] and Drenteln [Chief of the Gendarmery.—*Ed.*] expressed ... the opinion that teachers colleges will be unlikely to achieve the good hoped for from them since the teachers who graduate from the latter, although they are the offspring of peasant stock, grow apart from the peasantry in the course of their training and are not ready to accept their position in society: they easily make the transition to the ranks of those discontent with their way of life, as a result of which they may easily fall prey to the influence of revolutionary propaganda. The Minister of Finance and the Chief of the Gendarmery gave voice to their conviction that the task of providing elementary education was not so complex as to make sophisticated teaching techniques absolutely essential. That task consists in teaching children to read, write, count and pray to God, and therefore it would be more appropriate to entrust it for the most part to the clergy....

M. I. Ulyanova:

That was a time when many people feared that teachers would know too much.... The diehards of Simbirsk Gubernia were, as was to have been expected, particularly fearful, and the mood of the new teachers in their schools

was not to their liking. At the Gubernia Zemstvo Assembly fears were even voiced to the effect that teachers trained at teachers colleges "do not wholly meet the requirements as far as their moral character is concerned".[202]

I. N. Ulyanov:

The existence of teachers colleges is, in my opinion, an essential part of the existence of elementary schools, if the latter are to have a solid and fruitful organisational base. Indeed can it possibly be maintained that elementary education, even if conceived in the most modest terms as designed to do no more than make the masses literate, does not require specially trained teachers? I would maintain that this is not the case, and that the fact that specially trained teachers are required should be seen as a self-evident truth by this time: questioning it is tantamount to saying a doctor does not need to study medicine or a gardener how to garden, etc.[203]

N. P. Dolgovo-Saburov—governor of Simbirsk to I. N. Ulyanov, Director of Elementary Schools, 1881:

Recently tendencies observed in the views of graduates from the Poretsk Teachers College have been calling forth doubts as to their suitability for the profession (for example with regard to Zotov, Agafonov et al.). I venture to make a humble comment to Your Excellency that it might be useful, when appointing teachers of elementary schools, to make a more careful selection of candidates.

V. F. Kashkarov—graduate from the Poretsk Teachers College and teacher in an elementary school in Simbirsk Gubernia:

Ilya Nikolayevich came to visit the Churadchin School.... During our conversation he saw a book on my desk which he advised me to put away more carefully, so that it might not attract the attention of visitors. The book was about the Synod. Among other things he asked if I carried on a correspondence with anyone. At the time I had a nephew studying in St. Petersburg with whom I used to correspond. Ilya Nikolayevich said that I should be careful not to write anything untoward in those letters, since letters were opened and read.[204]

M. I. Ulyanova:

Ilya Nikolayevich was a civil servant in the Ministry of Public Education and his years of service received due recognition in the form of promotions and medals, yet he never developed a bureaucrat's attitudes to life, as was so typical of those times: he never behaved as a careerist or started cringing before his superiors. What was important for him was not being promoted or awarded medals but the principles at stake in his work, seeing the schooling he sought to provide flourish, and making sure that it was organised in the most effective way possible. He put his whole heart and soul into his work and gave off his best. Those in charge valued his efficiency and zeal, but looked askance later when they saw that Ilya Nikolayevich did not go out of his way to ensure that what he was doing was

adapted sufficiently to the spirit of the times. Even in the 1880s he remained an idealist, a "man of the sixties": he was quite incapable of adapting his work to suit new trends, and in the town of Simbirsk he was known as the "Great Liberal".[205]

* * *

There is a science fiction story that recounts how cars were racing one another when suddenly something rather like a taut strip of rubber catapulted them backwards—the roadway was blocked as it were by an invisible wall, which would not let anything pass beyond it. Some cars left the main road in an attempt to skirt round the obstacle. Yet it proved impossible to either drive or walk round the wall: it stretched right across the horizon as far as the eye could see.

Yet if we leave to one side science fiction or creatures operating within unknown dimensions different from the three already familiar to us, if we forget all that, we will realise that there is just such a wall in our lives as well, that there has always been such a wall and that there will always be one. Indeed it is Time itself that erects that wall. The years that have been set aside for each one of us are finite in number and once we reach that limit we are confronted by that impenetrable wall. Whether the scope for action of any given era is great or wretchedly small—that depends upon the historical period in question or the society each man is destined to live in.

"The people as a whole are the serfs of the

government officials, just as the peasants were the serfs of the landlords.... All the other European peoples had won political liberty for themselves long ago. Only in Turkey and in Russia are the people still politically enslaved by the sultan's government and by the tsarist autocratic government,"[206] wrote Lenin at the beginning of the twentieth century when addressing the rural poor. His father, who had devoted himself to the work of educating the rural poor, had not been prepared to draw such a conclusion, one that was stern and meant no turning back, like decree of fate. He was still hoping.

He tried hard, toiled assiduously and did all he possibly could to combat darkness and ignorance. Yet his efforts were doomed to failure. Lenin was to write that the top bureaucracy exhibited an impressive degree of political instinct, realising as it did that "the autocracy can never reconcile itself to self-reliance, honesty, independent convictions, and pride in real knowledge of *any kind whatsoever*".[207] It was inevitable that, even during his first decade in Simbirsk, Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov would come up against that invisible wall which used to block the path of any champion of enlightenment in Russia. All Ulyanov's endeavours were bound to come up against it—his work to organise new schools, train teachers and improve the entire teaching process.

This struggle was not to be rewarded by victory. Many years later—in 1913—Vladimir Ilyich was to write: "Yes, the Russian people's teachers are driven like rabbits. Yes, the

government bars the way to education to nine-tenths of the population of Russia."[208] Yet life goes on regardless, and it is possible to achieve a good deal that is useful if the individual resolves not to let his own existence be wasted in self-deluding anticipation of better times ahead.

There are periods, sometimes whole years on end, when it is better not to try to evaluate each individual step taken and to assess how it will be viewed at some future date but rather to work, work and go on working, as Ilya Nikolayevich used to maintain. People often seek to bury their worries and fears in work. He refused to indulge himself in disappointment or dejection. He most likely stretched himself to the limit to avoid that. How long, though, could he continue to live at that pace?

...Long afterwards, in the spring of 1922, as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, worried by the irresponsibility, sluggishness and red tape observed in the work of Soviet government officials, Lenin was to write angrily: "We managed to adopt the worst of tsarist Russia—red tape and sluggishness—and this is virtually stifling us, but we failed to adopt its *good* practices."[209] An example of what was intelligent and commendable and worth taking over from the old order in Russia would be, among other things, the work of upright men, those who, regardless of the rank or title they enjoyed, were of use to others, those for whom social significance was an indispensable aspect of their work and who never worked merely to fur-

ther their own interests, career or well-being, those who always and in every way possible sought to put behind them the traditional and incredibly hardy figure of the Russian civil servant, notorious for his obsequiousness, love of red tape and bribe-taking, reluctant to lift a finger if it did not serve to enhance his authority or improve his promotion prospects or material well-being.

There are few people in the Soviet Union who will not be familiar with the words which someone once said about Lenin and which Gorky passed down: "Ilyich, too, most probably had to hold down his soul by its wings...." It is however likely that we stop far less often to consider how immeasurably wide are the implications of that expression, and how much life experience is compressed within it.

"Holding down your soul by its wings".... Most probably this applies to those who do nothing that is out of keeping with their character, who do nothing just because they are told to or out of habit, or merely because it is expected of them. Everything they do is thought through and has ideas and inspiration behind it—no step they take is haphazard. What they are working towards is the most important thing in life to them, and all their thoughts are concentrated on it, their will and their energy, just as a magnifying glass brings together dispersed sunlight into a single, sharp ray that can set alight whatever is in its path. This striking ability to concentrate thoughts and energy, characteristic of Lenin, was also inherent in his father's character, as he went

about collecting funds, opening schools and training teachers.

"Holding down your soul by its wings"—this phrase might also be used of those who, after discovering the poetry of dreams, never forget the prose of real life or let themselves overlook its details. Lenin knew how to subject even the most attractive flight of fancy to sober analysis and assess it in terms of the tasks of the moment. He never lost sight of everyday details as he fought to rebuild the world or as he took steps that determined the course of his life. Gorky wrote that Lenin's heroism—"a phenomenon not rare in Russia—was the modest ascetic dedication of an honest Russian intellectual-revolutionary, unshakeably convinced that there can be social justice on earth".[210] Here again the example of the selfless devotion of his father comes into play. An able student who had attracted the attention of the great Lobachevsky[211] himself, a promising young astronomer whose very first published work met with approval, a committed researcher and able teacher of exact sciences—Ulyanov was all this and more. Yet, although it meant depriving himself of a great deal, he devoted himself to endless worries connected with ABC's, firewood and benches for primary-school children. Years later Doctor Averbach, who had on several occasions had long conversations with Ulyanov's son, was to write that Vladimir Ilyich "abandoned what might have been an outstanding career as a scholar or professor in favour of that of an underground organiser of a new society, obliged to spend almost the whole of

his life in poverty and hardship....”[212]

“Holding down your soul by its wings”.... That most likely also involves the ability not to let yourself give way to melancholy, not to behave in a way that is out of character, or that does not match up to your convictions, believing that the success of the work already embarked upon is bound to be achieved, even if you personally do not live to see it. Let us recall what Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov said to a country school-teacher starting out in his first post: “I know that the world can offer few sights more horrible than this school, but show people what you are made of, that you know what you have been trained for and you will be able to set the school up as something worthy of the name. See a set of pupils through the elementary course.” Those parting words by the educator are echoed a generation later by his son the revolutionary in the sentence dictated by Lenin at the very end of his life: “There is no such thing as an absolutely hopeless situation.”[213]

...Recognition and admiration are things that are usually won by people who have the power to change their times. Yet time—infinitely more often—changes people. History—and indeed we ourselves—have known few flamboyant heroes who seemed progressive—really progressive to the tips of their fingers—while there were favourable circumstances. Yet circumstances changed with the times—and our heroes along with them. Incidentally our heroes were ready to race forward, this time to race ahead of reaction.

After serfdom had been abolished, during

the thaw as it was known, the time seemed ripe for bathing in a sunshine of reforms. In times such as those it is not only bad for a person's reputation, but positively dangerous, to abstain from the pleasure of being progressive for a while, just as it is foolish to have a reputation of being progressive during other times. There was not long to wait for reaction to set in: the autocrat, deeply alarmed by now, called upon the powers of reaction for help. The reactionaries, as incidentally Lenin was to point out, were "bold men" and moreover "not formalists" but "practical men".[214] The times were beginning to change and people with them.

Kropotkin recalled: "During the sixties in Russia and particularly in St. Petersburg there were many progressive men, who seemed to be ready to sacrifice everything for their convictions. I used to ask myself the question: 'What happened to them?' I used to start talking to them and they would reply: 'Be more cautious young man!' Their code of behaviour consisted of proverbs such as 'Might is right' or 'There's no point in banging your head against a brick wall', of which there unfortunately exist a large number in the Russian language. They would say things like: 'We have already accomplished something, don't demand any more of us' or 'Be patient, this situation cannot last for long'."

An example is afforded us in the person of Pazukhin, Marshal of the Nobility in Alatyr Uyezd, Simbirsk Gubernia. A few years previously he had expressed his gratitude to Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov in the following

terms: "Through his influence and example he has brought people, who previously took no interest in elementary schools, to become closely involved with the campaign to provide elementary schooling." Later however with the same disarming sincerity Pazukhin admitted in a letter: "People's infatuation with the new ideas was so strong that it paralysed their critical faculties. Every reform was met with universal approval and the few sceptical voices were blotted out by the loud praise from the chorus." The author of those lines was soon to have the chance to be himself without any impediment and straightaway he began to criticise elementary schools.

This gentleman, who had previously been no more than an obscure Simbirsk landowner, now called upon "healthy elements" to give thought to Russia's future, to a programme of reactionary reforms and he moved to St. Petersburg, where he was put in charge of the chancellery in the Ministry of the Interior. At times like those some men rise suddenly to the surface, while others, more concerned for their good name, prefer to observe what is going on from the wings. Thus the teacher and enlightener Bunakov, referred to earlier, decided to embark on that very same path of action for himself: "To work actively and usefully in conditions like these is impossible, both common sense and straightforward conscientiousness dictate that we should leave the stage till times are more propitious."

Only a few people, very few indeed continued with the work they had embarked upon

in better or grimmer years. They worked on without making allowances for the difficult conditions, without looking back, using nothing but their own common sense as a guide. Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov was one of them.

To do one's duty honestly—however modest that task might be—was something that inevitably constituted a challenge and a reproach to the ingratiating majority, anxious to warm their hands, so as to stay warm in the decades to come.... There was even more to it than that. To serve one's cause with patriotism unsullied by any selfish aspirations is something based on principles and views opposed to those advocated by reactionaries.

Let the following example suffice....

On an April night in 1870 Ulyanov, Inspector of Elementary Schools in Simbirsk Gubernia was at work on his first official report. Among other things it recommended that corporal punishment of pupils be abandoned and that wherever possible this should be replaced by the exertion of "moral pressure on pupils". Ilya Nikolayevich was a convinced opponent of anything that dealt a blow to man's self-respect. He saw self-respect as being important to peasant children and it was for this reason that he turned to the teachers of the elementary schools with the following words: "I should hope that corporal punishment would be excluded altogether...." The progressive educational theories of the day and Russian democratic public opinion also demanded that corporal punishment be outlawed. Russian revolutionaries fought to uphold man's rights and to combat

all outrages against the individual.

On a January morning of 1878 Vera Zasulich who was by then a member of the Narodnaya Volya walked into the reception room of the Prefect of St. Petersburg, opened her handbag, took out a pistol and shot at Adjutant General Fyodor Trepov. This step was taken after the student Andrei Bogolyubov, arrested and convicted for his part in the demonstration near Kazan Cathedral, had been flogged on orders from the city Prefect.

Bogolyubov was not destined to complete his term—fifteen years' hard labour—because he soon went out of his mind. Trepov survived the attack, although the doctors never succeeded in extracting the bullet. This last fact inspired the bitter jest of Saltykov-Shchedrin: Trepov used to live in the same building as he did, and the satirist used to maintain that he was scared of meeting the Prefect on the stairs because he might shoot that bullet at him. The trial of Vera Zasulich was to provide a platform for a condemnation of tyranny in Russia.

An important contribution to this condemnation was that made by the defendant's courageous lawyer, Pyotr Alexandrov. At the trial, he stated publicly that humiliating punishments of the kind to which Bogolyubov had been subjected were an insult to the honour and self-respect of the individual. Alexandrov was five years younger than Ilya Nikolayevich but he too clearly remembered the times when the birch had held sway throughout the country. "The birch reigned supreme everywhere: in schools, village as-

semblies, it was an essential accoutrement of the landowner in his stable, later in the barracks and finally in the police stations." Although corporal punishment in public had been outlawed immediately after the abolition of serfdom, the birch was still permitted: to use Alexandrov's words, it had come to resemble a Russian souvenir.

The jury acquitted Vera Zasulich, but the birch was not outlawed for good. The Director of Elementary Schools in Simbirsk Gubernia would have to come out against its use in classroom on a number of occasions. In a special circular Ulyanov informed teachers in the elementary schools that he regarded as unacceptable punishments involving "birches, kneeling, hair-pulling or ear-tweaking, finger-flicking, kicking, etc. for as forms of punishment these were detrimental to children's health and fostered coarse habits". A detailed list of the punishments prohibited in schools goes to show that it was no simple matter to eliminate these widely accepted "coarse habits". Ilya Nikolayevich wrote that circular in 1881, which in itself is revealing: he had written it in the year when the successful attempt on the life of Tsar Alexander II was made, when reactionary repression was in full swing and ready to use any methods whatsoever in order to combat free-thinking. Prince Vladimir Meshchersky who saw himself as the spiritual mentor of Alexander III, wrote in the newspaper *Grazhdanin* (The Citizen) of which he was editor: "If flogging is stopped, then power will melt away. Just as the Russian peasant cannot survive

without salt and black bread, so he cannot survive without the birch. Just as a man cannot survive without salt, so a people cannot survive without the birch.... If we care for our fellowmen we must keep on the birch."

Almost forty years later, in the summer of 1920 Lenin, the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, asked the correspondents of some Japanese newspapers when he received them in his Kremlin office whether it was true that Japanese parents never beat their children, and said he had read of this in a book. "That's very important, in view of the fact that the practice of beating children in the schools has not yet been entirely eliminated in the so-called civilised countries of Europe, not even in a country like Switzerland."

"As a rule parents do not beat their children in Japan," replied one of the Japanese journalists. "In our country something in the way of a cult of the child constitutes the basis of family-life as a whole and of our state system."

"Then yours is not only a fortunate, but also a great people," went on Vladimir Ilyich with a smile, and then after casting a searching glance in the direction of the journalist, he asked again: "Are you quite sure that in Japan not even the tiniest bit of slapping goes on?"

"No, we never beat children." As the Japanese journalist was later to write up in his newspaper report: "Lenin noted with great satisfaction that one of the policy principles of the Workers' and Peasants' Government was to abolish the corporal punishment of children."[215]

THE IDEALS THE FAMILY LIVED BY

After their return from Kokushkino, in the garden of the house on Moskovskaya Street, the eldest daughter Anna—aged then thirteen or fourteen—began to sing some lines that had caught her imagination:

In spirit, brothers, we are one,
Both believing the time will come....

She went on singing them to herself until Maria Alexandrovna heard her. She called her daughter over to her and warned: "You should not sing that song in the town. Here you might cause trouble for your father—everyone has enemies. They might go and tell that illegal songs were being sung in the garden of the Director of Elementary Schools."

Illegal songs. The forbidden fruit is always sweetest! It always holds out attractions, and in particular for children. There is an air of mystery even about something not yet understood, even if the point behind the ban is not yet appreciated. To discover and suddenly realise that grown-ups are having secrets as well, that they are doing something that is not permitted, turning off the ordinary accepted path—and moreover not just any adults, but those a child knows best, Mother and Father: such a discovery is not easily forgotten. Anna Ilyinichna was never to forget that first encounter with something illegal.

While they were still at school the Ulyanov children also had their first brush with forbidden works of literature. At the time these had included for example the works of Pisa-

rev.[216] Pisarev himself was at the time a prisoner in the Peter and Paul Fortress, who had tragically met his death even before he reached his twenty-eighth birthday: his articles condemning the authorities—many of which were written in the cells of the fortress—all won him the love and admiration of the younger generation, that love and admiration which are inevitable when talent and martyrdom come together—a combination that is, alas, far from rare in history.

Alexander Ulyanov told his sister: "They say that the gendarme whose task it was to keep an eye on Pisarev saw that he was drowning, but deliberately let him drown, and did not call for help."

Anna was indignant. Alexander said nothing, mulling things over to himself as usual.... They studied Pisarev's works from cover to cover and tried to follow his recommendations in everything. "Careers that have been achieved through a man's own efforts are always more solid and broader in scope than those which have been achieved through bowing and scraping and the patronage of well-connected relatives.... Even Herostratus carved out his career by his own efforts and went down in history without resorting to patronage."[217]

They used to read fifty or sometimes even a hundred pages a day: without that, according to Pisarev, no one would be able to call themselves well-read. Anna decided to drop music lessons, for Pisarev made fun of young ladies who sought to master the piano, although their real talents lay in embroidering

slippers. Pisarev insisted that young men should become independent as soon as possible and should not sponge on their parents. This maxim met with a keen response. Ilya Nikolayevich at the time was making ready to take his two eldest children to the All-Russia Exhibition, sail along the Volga and show them Moscow. This trip with their father would have been a great excitement for the children, yet Anna turned down the offer: "No, in a year's time we shall be going to St. Petersburg to study and that will cost so much! There's no need to spend out money on a trip to Moscow now."

Maria Alexandrovna tried to persuade the children to change their minds, saying: "Papa himself is offering you this opportunity...."

Alexander supported Anna, although it could be sensed that it was not without regrets: he too renounced the tempting prospect of that journey.... Later after losing both her father and her brother, Anna Ilyinichna felt sick at heart as she thought back to that trip that never took place. What joy it could have brought to all of them!... It is only with the years, through the bitterness of an individual's own life experience, that he begins to understand that all that is good in life is not necessarily straightforward and that ideal plans are probably not the most reliable....

They read Turgenev's novel *Fathers and Sons* and interpreted the hero Bazarov through Pisarev's eyes. Turgenev was writing in those days about the new people in an unfriendly tone: they loomed up from the future, and were designed to hold the reader at a distance

rather than involve him. Indeed in his article on the subject Pisarev wrote: "Turgenev is one of the finest representatives of the previous generation...."[218] Yet he was writing about a living writer, who was still to accomplish great things!... To Bazarov, however, and to Pisarev himself the young people of the day looked for an example. Let us bear in mind though that Bazarov was active on the eve of the peasant Reform and Pisarev's article came out in fact a year after serfdom had finally been abolished. Were they however destined despite the interval to inspire young people, to inspire that very same Alexander Ulyanov, as they crossed the threshold of adult life fifteen or twenty years later on?!

Alexander, a future student of natural sciences, was attracted by Bazarov and his words to the effect that "Nature is a workshop, and man in Nature is a workman". What he held most dear of all was Bazarov's independent, critical view of the world, which used to impress the younger generation: only one authority in the whole world was seen as worthy to be acknowledged as such—reason. He would not take anything on faith.... The flash of lightning from the sixties had been so dazzling that it had lit up, albeit with a fading light, the moral quests of the 1870s and 1880s as well.

Most of us today have a nihilistic view of nihilism, it is one that we have grown up with from our schooldays. Nowadays it is probably impossible to imagine in full measure and adequate detail that path of negation which all the progressive-minded in old Russia had to

traverse: it meant turning their back on their faith in a kind tsar and formal progress, seeing beyond falsifications of history, rejecting hypocrisy, demolishing sanctimonious authorities, and closing the eternal gap between words and deeds. Meanwhile, to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Who nowadays can be genuinely moved by the parrable of the trio of virtues found in the Russian people—faith in God, the Tsar and the Fatherland. Yet Bazarov, in the 1860s, had been forced to demonstrate the opposite. He stated with fervour: "The one good thing about the Russian is the rotten opinion he has of himself."[219] Once again it is worth repeating that to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.... After meeting Lenin in 1919, Gorky brought up the subject of the unavoidable privations, to which the revolution was condemning those who in the past had prospered. Then he asked Lenin: "Is it just my impression, or do you really feel sorry for people?" The answer came back: "I am sorry for clever people. There are too few clever people in our country. Ours is a people in which men of talent, but lazy minds, predominate."[220]

Bazarov was a clever man: Pisarev was in no doubt about that and, with reference to the figure of Bazarov, he concluded: "The life of a man with a limited mind almost always follows a course that is more even and more pleasant than the life of a genius, or even simply that of a clever man. Clever people find it difficult to come to terms with phenomena that the masses grow accustomed to without

the slightest difficulty."[221] Did Alexander Ulyanov think back to those words when he was preparing his speech for his trial?

In that speech he wrote: "I can trace back to my early childhood that vague feeling of discontent at the system in general, which, as it permeated my conscious mind ever more deeply, brought me to those convictions which motivated me in the case under consideration."

Young Vladimir Ulyanov also read the works of Pisarev. When already a mature man he was to repeat Pisarev's words: "We must dream!" He began to quote these lines from Pisarev: "The gulf between dreams and reality does no harm, provided the dreamer believes seriously in his dream, considers life around him with careful attention and compares these observations with his castles in the air, and in general works conscientiously to transform his fantasies into reality."[222]

In that old town of Simbirsk there is a lighted window in the house on Moskovskaya Street. The schoolboy Vladimir Ulyanov is leaning over his desk, reading banned books by Pisarev: as soon as one page is finished, he turns to the next. What castles in the air was he contemplating at that moment? We are unlikely ever to learn the answer to that question. Yet that same schoolboy would eventually come to be known as the "Dreamer in the Kremlin"[223]. In those early days however no one would ever have predicted or even dreamt of such a phrase....

A doctor friend had given the Ulyanovs Pisarev's books to read. They also had Cherny-

shevsky's novel *What Is to Be Done?*—a work that had long since been strictly banned—in their library. Anna and Alexander both read the novel. Vladimir first opened it when he was fourteen years old. Many years later, when living in exile, Lenin recalled: "I did not read it properly then, just skimmed through it." In a small café in Geneva he was joining in an argument about Chernyshevsky and went on to say: "But after my brother's execution, knowing that Chernyshevsky's novel had been one of my brother's favourite works, I set about reading it properly and pored over the book not for several days, but several weeks."

After his brother's execution.... The passing years usually reduce and even out differences in age between the older and younger children in a family. These two brothers were not however granted very much time together: they were only together as small children and growing boys. Anna and Alexander might still be willing to join in a game of hide-and-seek, but, having found a hiding-place, they would start talking about the books they were reading, about the "book for grown-ups" they had managed to lay their hands on. Vladimir at that time would still be absorbed in the excitement of the game itself....

Evenings at home for the Ulyanov family and their shared reading were often centred round the poetry of Nekrasov. It rippled, sparkling, through their household, a vital source of inspiration. As the Ulyanov children swung to and fro on their swing, they would often be singing songs that were Nekrasov's poems set to music. The parents' favourite

poem "Song of Yeremushka" was later to be recited by the children. As they discussed the Decembrists they would read and re-read the poems "Russian Women" and "Grandfather". As a young man Ilya Nikolayevich had copied out the poem entitled "At the Front Door" which in 1860 had only been available in the newspaper *Kolokol.* When his children came to appreciate Nekrasov, Ilya Nikolayevich showed them his original handwritten copy.

The children also were to discover Ilya Nikolayevich's volume of Nekrasov's early poems published in 1863. The children would open it and see his notes in the margin, the lines which he had underlined and lines which their father had written in by hand:

Go battle for her reputation,
For your convictions and your love....
And blamelessly in this endeavour

There followed the lines that had been blotted out by the censor, but which had not been erased from men's memories:

Go die—but not in vain: forever
Remains the cause which claims your blood....[224]

These last lines had been written in by hand.

Ilya Nikolayevich could not hold back from imparting to his children the feelings which had filled his heart at the time, the thoughts which had preoccupied him, the knowledge which he had acquired. The urge to impart knowledge and dispel ignorance never once waned. His eldest son, Alexander, pointed out in his famous speech at the trial:

"For an educated man the right to think freely and share his thoughts with those whose level of education is lower than his own, is not merely an indisputable right, but a need and an obligation."

But I would like to know, even when dying,
That your two feet are on the right, true road....[225]

Russia with its pain and hopes wept and laughed in Nekrasov's poems. For Ilya Nikolayevich these poems provided a precious echo of his own thoughts and cares. He would share these thoughts within his family circle, when he came home to the house on Moskovskaya Street or returned from exhaustingly long journeys through the gubernia and was able to relax at home in the evening.

Later the time would come when, while filling out a questionnaire for a delegate to the Ninth Party Conference, Lenin was to write—in answer to the question: "What localities of Russia do you know well and how long did you live there?"—"Best of all the Volga district where I was born and lived till 17."[226]

At the age of seventeen Vladimir Ilyich was to leave Simbirsk. He lived on the banks of the Volga in fact till the age of twenty-three—in Kazan and Samara after leaving Simbirsk—yet he still wrote till the age of seventeen. Perhaps it was because the most vivid and immediate impressions of the world around us, not blurred by a whole host of personal concerns and preoccupations, are those which are gleaned in childhood and adolescence,

impressions which are as natural and logically consistent as the irreversible process of growing up itself.

Simbirsk with its wharves and barge haulers, Kokushkino with its surrounding villages and of course his father's stories, those endless tales of peasant life, of his efforts to drag along small Russian children to the schools and of course the Chuvash and Mordvinian children as well.

The ethnic minorities in the Volga region were treated with humiliating arrogance. When telling Nadezhda Krupskaya about Simbirsk, Lenin recalled: "...when they start talking about Tatars they would come out with a sarcastic 'prince', when talking about Jews they would without fail refer to them as 'Yids', Poles they would refer to as 'Polacks', and Armenians as 'Armyashky'...." In the Ulyanov family however all simple people were treated with respect, regardless of their ethnic origins—that all seemed perfectly natural. Yet, as the saying goes, "Sympathy alone is of no help to the hungry". The Director of Elementary Schools began opening schools for non-Russian children. His own son Vladimir acted as coach for the young Chuvash teacher Nikifor Okhotnikov. Okhotnikov had decided to enter the university and had been looking for a senior pupil from the gymnasium who would be able to help him with his Latin and Greek.

No one in the family had been against the idea: none of them had seen anything wrong with the plan and for nearly two years—his last two at the gymnasium—Vladimir had

coached Okhotnikov. Okhotnikov used to come to the Ulyanovs' house in the evenings, three times a week. Although it was the custom for senior pupils to be paid for such services, Vladimir did not take any money, nor did he do so even after his father's death, when the family was forced to rent out part of their house. Yet it was precisely Nikifor Okhotnikov who rushed to find horses for Maria Alexandrovna when the news came through from St. Petersburg that a tragedy had befallen her son Alexander.

A frequent visitor, one might even say a friend of the family, was Ivan Yakovlev, the compiler of the Chuvash alphabet and the first ABC, inspector of schools for Chuvash children and director of the training college for Chuvash teachers.... In the spring of 1918 the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars got a telephone call with a request to receive the historian, Professor Alexei Yakovlev, son of Yakovlev, the pioneer in education for the Chuvash people, who had known Lenin since his childhood. Yakovlev was worried about his father and that very same day a telegram was sent to Simbirsk from the Kremlin. The Chairman of the Simbirsk Soviet was inquired about the welfare of "Inspector Ivan Yakovlevich Yakovlev, who has worked for fifty years for the advance of the Chuvash people and suffered persecution from tsarism." Insofar as Vladimir Ilyich was showing concern for a man who was a close friend of his, and was doing so not in connection with his work, but rather for old times' sake, with the conscien-

tious precision that was a distinctive trait of all the Ulyanovs, he noted at the top of the page: "Please send the bill for this telegram to me *personally*."[227]

...Ilya Nikolayevich used to ask his eldest son Alexander sometimes at table during the midday meal: "Sasha, will you be coming to the evening service with us?"

—"No," came the reply.

His son had given a short firm answer, without explaining how he had come to his decision, and without telling anyone what thoughts were in his mind on this subject.... Only a short while before, the whole family had been going to Church together and standing close by each other during the service. At Christmas after returning from Church the family would light the Christmas tree.... A few days later, Ilya Nikolayevich turned to his son again and asked: "Will you be coming to the service with us?"

"No," was the reply once again.

Then Ilya Nikolayevich stopped asking, although it pained him to think that his son would not be going. During a visit from a teacher friend, Ilya Nikolayevich had said with a sigh that his children were not attending Church regularly, as they had in the past. Vladimir heard him make that remark, for he had been standing close to his father at the time. "They need a good hiding in that case," answered the guest, looking at Vladimir with a smile as he said so: "A good hiding!"

On a grey winter evening young Vladimir rushed out from the porch on to the thick crust of snow that came right up to the house.

The frosty air came up to meet him, calming him down with its shock of cold. His collar, however, was already unbuttoned and he was already twisting the chain of his cross round his fingers. He pulled, broke the chain and threw the cross away ... forever.

When did all that happen? Krupskaya was to write later: "By the age of fifteen Vladimir Ilyich was already firmly convinced that religion was one of man's inventions and that it was a conscious, or subconscious at least, deception. As a fifteen-year-old boy he tore his cross from his neck and threw it far, far away."

Vladimir Ilyich thought back to that day in March 1922, when he was in Moscow suburbs. Lenin's illness was becoming more and more obtrusive and his doctors had ordered him to move away from the city for a rest. In actual fact he was working as always: at this time on an article entitled "On the Significance of Militant Materialism".

Lenin would walk along with Nadezhda Konstantinovna to the forest across the crunchy layer of spring snow, which broke up underfoot in hard crumbs. They would come back by way of an avenue of lime trees using as a landmark the Church of the Life-Giving Trinity, that had been standing there for over two hundred years. With its gold tower picked out by the sunlight, the bell-tower soared aloft and two solid buttresses at the sides of the building serve to hold it down so to speak. The black clothes of the worshippers showed up against the white church and the white snow. A service was going on and Lenin was

thinking about sentences in his future article: The "masses should be supplied with the most varied atheist propaganda material, they should be made familiar with facts from the most diverse spheres of life, they should be approached in every possible way, so as to interest them, rouse them from their religious torpor."[228]

That same spring Lenin was to fill in a form for the All-Russia census of the members of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). After reading the question: "If you are an atheist, state since what age", he wrote—16.[229]

He threw away his cross, which was worn by all members of the Orthodox Church, both those who believed and those who doubted, those who worshipped their church with heartfelt faith and those who were only forced to do so, those who believed ardently and those who lied no less ardently. Regardless of all these differences, they all wore crosses round their necks. Vladimir and his elder brother had both, of their own accord, arrived at the decision to break with religion. The knowledge they had acquired by this stage had clearly influenced them. Alexander had felt drawn towards natural sciences ever since the Sixth Form of the gymnasium. He saw as essential a critical approach to the world around him, and therefore also to the church which occupied such a prominent place in that world.

Krupskaya was to write in connection with the question of religion: "Our generation grew up in conditions when, on the one hand, in

the schools and in the press the slightest sign of a lack of faith was clamped down on most strictly, while, on the other, the radical intelligentsia was indulging in all sorts of jokes about religion, coming out with all sorts of witty remarks. The intelligentsia had a whole folklore of its own that made fun of priests, religions; it included various poems, and anecdotes, which were not written down anywhere, but which were passed on by word of mouth."[230] Here Krupskaya has picked out what was a most characteristic trait of the Russian society of those times which was moving inescapably towards its collapse: the layer of religious and official dogmas, like sodden cardboard, was losing more and more of its layers drawn from everyday thoughts....

Finally religion was giving in to reason, reason that was free from violence, from constant constraints. And this, probably it was the main thing, resulted from the moral climate which reigned in the home of the Ulyanovs. This does not however mean that atheism was propagated in the house on Moskovskaya Street. It is worth at least pointing out however that Maria Alexandrovna was not so taken up with religion. Her elder daughter recalls: "She was not a particularly pious woman and visited the Russian church as rarely as she did the German one that was to be found in Simbirsk." As for Ilya Nikolayevich, he was a devoutly religious man. Although he taught physics and was concerned with self-education and self-improvement all his life, he remained a profound believer right up until the end of his days. He wished that his

children might follow in his footsteps. "He was distressed that his sons might stop believing," recalled Krupskaya.[231] This might have appeared to be something that could give rise to strife in the family, since the children were denying something that their father believed in. Shouldn't he perhaps demand their obedience, or force them to believe? No conflict, however, took place.

Ilya Nikolayevich's religious convictions were, in the words of his daughter Anna, "utterly pure, if I can use the phrase".[232] There was nothing of party affiliation, nothing self-seeking about them, nor did they in any way represent an attempt to keep to the "accepted" path. His religious faith had much in common with that of Zhukovsky,[233] a poet much admired by him, with the religious faith of the poet Nekrasov, whom Ilya Nikolayevich admired far more than Zhukovsky even. This faith found expression, for example, in Nekrasov's poem "Tranquillity", from which he used to like to recite extracts, and in particular the lines where Nekrasov refers to the "Temple of God" which for the poet is permeated with "a sense of faith pure as a child".

Anna Ilyinichna is writing here about something so personal, so intensely private, that, as you try to grasp her meaning, you begin to express your own ideas, as you move gradually forward, elucidating for yourself step by step what she means. What she is concerned with here is that sense of religion which strikes a chord within the individual's emotions, does not demand that people round-

about should follow suit, and which would not tolerate coercion. We are confronted here by that sincere faith which rejects all that is coarse and repressive, faith that can lend a man's heart inner radiance, which like memories can take us back to childish innocence, regardless of whether those memories happen to be glad, sad or tranquil.

Behold God's temple on the hill!
Pure faith with child-like fevour
All at once our hearts did fill.

Ilya Nikolayevich was only able to influence his children through his example. As his daughter Anna was to write in her reminiscences about her father, "at home we children saw before us a man of sincere convictions, whom we followed, while we were small. When our own convictions began to take shape, we children quietly and calmly announced that we should not be going to church ... and we were not subjected to any pressure".[2 3 4] In his work for the schools Ilya Nikolayevich followed the advice of one of the most enlightened minds of his times--that of Dobrolyubov. He also remained faithful to this man's principles in his relationships with his children as well. Dobrolyubov had written: "If prejudices and misconceptions of the older generation are implanted with undue rigour in impressionable children's minds from an early age, the enlightenment and the advance of a whole people can be held up for a long time by this sad state of affairs."[2 3 5]

Alexander Ulyanov was eleven years old, when, on hearing the question "What vices

are the most reprehensible?", he answered: "Lying and cowardice." Vladimir goes out of his way to model himself on his elder brother. He was growing up and beginning to adopt a critical stance towards himself. He had started musing about the heroism of men's feats and admits to his nearest and dearest: "I've been thinking about whether I have enough courage for that. Probably not." Vladimir also used to listen to his sister Olga practising on the piano—and the way she used to play one and the same study over and over again. With reference to her he used to say: "There's someone whose diligence you might well envy!" The eldest boy in the family had a rare capacity for self-control and always remained calm, regardless of the people he happened to be with. Vladimir was anxious to achieve that too, he was keen to keep his hastiness and hot temper under control. Those who were later to have the opportunity to observe Lenin in difficult circumstances would maintain that the only thing that gave away his moods—irritation, anger or indignation—was his pallor.... Yet his passionate nature could not be kept down for ever: that would have been impossible and it made itself felt in Lenin's every gesture and in all his writings.

While still at school at a time, when the teachers definitely based their whole approach on the "Holy Scriptures and the Liturgy", Vladimir Ulyanov at some stage read out to his class Cicero's speech against Catiline.

He began reciting by heart the classic text: "Tell me, Catiline, how long will you try our patience?"

Vladimir clenched his fists, his voice began to shake with emotion and his face turned pale. What had been going on in Cicero's times suddenly became important, a matter of life and death. Vladimir hated Catiline and set out to expose him. The class was spellbound.

—"Tell me, Catiline, how long will you try our patience? ...Our country, our mother, has long since feared and hated you, aware that every single one of your thoughts is directed against her, is aimed at matricide! This is how she turns to you, Catiline, this is her wordless exhortation: 'For so many years now, Catiline, not a single wicked deed or crime has been perpetrated without you: no executions of my citizens, harassment of my allies and sometimes unabashed robbery have been carried out without your knowledge and all this with impunity, you have almost regarded all this as something which had to be. You disregarded the laws and the courts and yet you prosper, so that in this very way you might flout them and overturn them. Indeed...'."

Whom did that perfidious Roman Lucius Sergius Catiline represent for Vladimir Ulyanov the schoolboy? He represented darkness as opposed to all that was light, he represented evil fighting against goodness, he personified age-old injustice, which all liberators call upon us to overturn. Those who heard young Ulyanov at that lesson, and Vladimir himself who must have felt the significance of what had been happening in the times of Cicero were as yet unable to appreciate the all-important implications of those minutes. With

hindsight it is unmistakably clear: the wrath of accusation, words filled with hate and reproach were to ring out many times on Lenin's mouth in the future. The feelings, the passionate nature, the powerful will would all come into their own in his mature years....

Vladimir Ilyich did not recall those words himself: when reminiscing with his wife about his school-days he happened to mention:

—"At one time I was very enthusiastic about Latin."

—"Latin!?" asked Nadezhda Konstantinovna in surprise.

—"Yes, but it impeded other studies and I gave up Latin."

...An account of the ideals the Ulyanov family lived by could go on for ever and ever, if for example an author was to embark upon the enormous, varied and serious range of books read in this family. To turn once more to Anna Ilyinichna's memoirs, we learn that from a very early age her brother Vladimir was "always very much the free-thinker, always very sensitive to and quick to respond to any offence against an individual's personal dignity..." Finally it is also worth remembering how often members of this family turned their attention to the verses of poets contributing to the satirical journal *Iskry* (The Sparks)[236], which mocked most wittily the life-style of the Russian bureaucracy. When she was with Lenin in Siberia Krupskaya was astonished to learn that Lenin knew by heart many of the verses of those poets. She was to write: "In particular Anna Ilyinichna knew a great many verses by the *Iskry* poets, both

the legal and the illegal ones, and indeed she even used to write poems herself. She was to remember them till the end of her days and in the last months of her life, when she was almost crippled by paralysis, when I came home from work and used to sit down with her to drink tea, I usually used to bring the conversation round to the *Iskry* poets and she was always ready to talk about them. I could not get over her incredible memory. She could remember countless verses well loved by the progressive intelligentsia of those times."[237]

Let us return however to the topic that was being discussed earlier. Why was it that the Ulyanov children—all and every one of them—were to become revolutionaries? Let us remember what had been pointed out earlier: the more superficial our understanding of the present, the more the future will take us by surprise. First of all we learnt about the way the Ulyanov family lived from day to day and then we turned to the family's thoughts and ideas and tried to imagine the ideals that they lived by. Much of what appeared unexpected at first later seemed quite natural.

Dobrolyubov, much professed by Ilya Nikolayevich, had written: "The younger generation must of necessity be under the influence of the older generation, and from this stems enormous benefit for the development and improvement of the individual and mankind."[238] It was precisely the example provided by their elders, the life experience of their father and mother that had convinced the younger generation in the Ulyanov family that life can only have a true purpose when

the individual is serving his people, and that respect and consideration for ordinary people was an essential characteristic of any member of the intelligentsia, and that in this world there is only one source of wealth compatible with human dignity, that does not humiliate or distort the individual, and that is wealth of knowledge.

The children shared all their parents' ideals, yet the path in life followed by the elder generation is, just like time, never to be repeated. Any family is to be envied in which there are close ties between the older and the younger generation. Yet even if the noble labours of the elder generation are comprehensible, admired and held dear by the children, in the course of time after searching for honest answers to the questions as to what their fathers accomplished and what else they might have done, children will then proceed to search for their own path through life.

Ilya Nikolayevich's urge to devote his efforts to the education of peasant children was fanned by the mood of the progressive sections of Russian society at that particular time, which had been anxious to come into closer contact with the life of the people and to help the people. The children of Ulyanov, this champion of enlightenment, not only belonged to a different generation but also to a different era. They were setting out in life at a time, when Russia was ripe for revolution: "The year 1861 begot the year 1905,"[239] Lenin was to comment later.

Yes, the path followed by the elder generation is, just like time, never to be repeated.

Dobrolyubov wrote: "Even if we were to accept that the teacher can always rise higher than the individual pupil (which although it happens sometimes of course, nevertheless far from always), he could not in any case rise higher than a whole generation. The child makes ready to live in a new setting, his environment will be different from that of twenty to thirty years previously, when his teacher had been educated. Usually a teacher not only fails to anticipate the needs of the new times, but simply fails to understand these needs and considers them ridiculous."[240]

First and foremost the Ulyanovs brought their children up to be decent people—to be good, honest people with a pronounced sense of justice. In their family such principles were seen as natural and were adhered to unswervingly: conscientiousness, sincerity, modesty, self-respect and respect for others were aspired to by everyone. Yet principles such as these were impossible to apply outside the family home or in the autocratic Russian Empire as a whole. It was this heightened conception of civic duty that brought the Ulyanovs to the revolutionary movement. There was no other path for them. It is not for nothing and no coincidence that Vladimir Ilyich repeated several times Chernyshevsky's words: "Every decent man has to be a revolutionary."

Is that sentiment applicable for all times and for all ages everywhere and always? I should be reluctant to judge. At the end of the nineteenth century though and in the early twentieth century in Russia, however, this really did apply.

There is something else which is equally obvious. All of us want our children to grow up to be decent people. We do a good deal towards that end, not necessarily always as skilfully as we might, in view of our parental bias, but nevertheless a great deal all the same. We consider carefully, take advice and make guesses as to how we could best help our daughter or son to single out her or his special talents and abilities as early as we can, as to how we might help them on their way so that they might find their feet in life happily and without making blunders on the way. Do we however always succeed in fostering in our children those qualities, without which it is impossible to bring up a good citizen? Do we manage to make them appreciate that they should not work to live, but learn to live for their work; that they should acquire an education not so as to secure their own material welfare but so as to be of use to people around them. We need to try and impart to the younger generation elementary upright principles, to foster in them kindness, truthfulness, honesty and a sense of justice. Then children will be able themselves to find their path in life. The times they find themselves living in will point the way.

It would appear far from difficult to judge the distant past with the advantage of hindsight. Then we are able to sort out events and compartmentalise them, analyse them, from this or that particular angle, to dissect what at one time was a united and inseparable family. We know what is going to happen in advance—and this applies to every event

which is to happen one year, or ten years after our particular starting-point. It is more than likely that Ilya Nikolayevich and Maria Alexandrovna suffered and felt tortured by the uncertainty facing their children. Their hearts would have been troubled by the eternal question which causes parents so much anguish--What will become of their children? They could see and feel the gulf that existed between the ideals and convictions of their children and what awaited them beyond the threshold of the family home. Their own concepts of what was worthy and noble and about their vocation in life would have to come up against views that were alien to theirs, those views that held sway in adult life, in which they had to find their place.... A high voltage difference causes a spark--that is the order of things in physics.

In life however irreconcilable differences in men's views give rise to barricades and each individual will take up his place on one or the other side of those barricades....

One of the developments which gave Ilya Nikolayevich cause for fear at this time was without doubt the series of events which were being talked about in a whisper and which were causing even the foundations of the Russian monarchy to shake, that monarchy which had always seemed completely unshakeable. "I call upon the living! Answer me, if there is but one living man out there in the field...."

Both to "go among the people" and the attempts by the revolutionary intelligentsia to create their own settlements in rural areas had been brought to an end by repressive

measures engineered by the police. Those who advocated political terrorism within the Zemlya i Volya (Land and Freedom) organisation were expressing their impatience ever more loudly within the ranks of that secret revolutionary society. They were convinced that systematic terrorist activity would force the government to retreat, that it would wrest new freedoms from the government, that would, in turn, make possible peaceful propaganda among the people.

Each shot in this terrorist campaign sent long echoes rippling through the whole of Russia and stirred up the hearts and minds of all those who heard them, particularly when it came to young people. New shots began to ring out in protest at the outrages perpetrated against political prisoners: new waves of arrests followed and more and more political prisoners filled the dungeons. On the one hand there was terrorist activity carried out by the revolutionaries and on the other a police campaign of terror against the revolutionaries.

Anna Ilyinichna recalled in this connection: "I was thirteen to fourteen at the time: it was at the end of the seventies, when the terrorist movement was starting to embark upon a revolutionary path. It was quite clear that our father, who himself had never been a revolutionary, and who at the time was over forty and carrying the responsibility for the family, was anxious to protect us children." He was particularly concerned about the future of his sons: Ilya Nikolayevich dreamt of them taking up academic careers, hoping that

they would be able to enjoy what he had had to go without, once he had chosen the career of a teacher.

Events followed one upon another with immutable logic. The years had now brought to the vanguard of the movement those who in the days of Karakozov had been young novices. The first young revolutionary to attack Alexander II was Alexander Solovyov. He shot at the Emperor thirteen years after Karakozov, bar two days, on April 2, 1879 in St. Petersburg's Palace Square.

During his interrogation Solovyov recounted how, once he had decided to kill the tsar, he had never reckoned with any chance of escaping, or with any help for himself: "I had been convinced that through my deed I would be changing our society for the better, that I would not be bringing any harm to my homeland and that I would be helping to wake up the Russian people and compel it to think more closely about its position."

The supreme criminal court sentenced Solovyov to death by hanging. He did not wish to make an appeal and he was duly executed. According to the words of Vera Figner, he combined "the courage of a hero, the selflessness of an ascetic and the goodness of a child".

In that same year—1879—the Zemlya i Volya (Land and Freedom) organisation split into two separate groups: those opposed to terror set up Chorny Peredel (General Redistribution) while advocates of terrorism founded Narodnaya Volya (People's Will). The Executive Committee of Narodnaya Volya

sentenced Alexander II to the death penalty. It was to be "today or never!".

This was how the hounding of Alexander II began—two years of shootings, explosions, before the sentence would actually be implemented. On the morning of Novermber 18, 1878, People's Will revolutionaries lay in wait for the tsar's train four miles from Alexandrovka Halt: the Emperor would be returning from Livadia to the capital. Two mines were laid under the rails. Soon the engine could be heard in the distance. Andrei Zhelyabov connected the wires and the batteries. In the distance the rattle of the train moving safely on its way began to die down.... The explosion took place the following day under the supervision of Sofia Perovskaya. The mine went off three miles from the passenger station on the Moscow-Kursk Railway. Eight coaches were derailed, but the Emperor was not in the train.

On February 5, 1880 there was an explosion in the Winter Palace. At twenty minutes past six in the evening, the main guard-room was destroyed and the floor in the tsar's dining room was damaged. Alexander II arrived half an hour late for dinner on that occasion. The mine had been laid by the carpenter, Stepan Khalturin, who had managed to penetrate the palace.

Later on, after these events had taken place, Sofia Perovskaya was to say: "Those who know the life in our country and the conditions in which we had to act, will not accuse us of immorality or cruelty."

On March 1, 1881 what some people had

been working towards and other feared, actually happened. Ilya Nikolayevich had been dreading such an event with all his heart: imagining such an act with all its details was quite simply beyond him.

Documents and Eyewitnesses Testify

THE EXPLOSION

MARCH 1, 1881

V. A. Posse—member of the revolutionary movement:

...I was walking along Nevsky Prospekt to the Shapiro photographer's to buy a portrait of Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky. When I was going across the bridge which spans the Yekaterininsky Canal, a deafening explosion resounded to the right of me. Before I had reached the other side of the bridge a second explosion followed. The atmosphere of the times was such that the first thought which came into my head was that this meant another attempt on the Tsar's life.

A faint, timid voice in the depths of my heart said: "How wonderful if they were successful this time." Then a louder more resolute voice within me objected: "Nothing will come of it anyway, it will just mean new executions and new victims."

It was as if a nervous spasm had shaken the whole of the Nevsky Prospekt.... An assassination attempt ... bombs ... wounded ... unhurt .... Thank the Lord ... Wickedness .... Those were some of the disjointed words flying to and fro through the air....

By the time I reached the house in Fontanka Street where my brother had a flat which I shared with him the first leaflets announcing the martyr's death of the Tsar-Liberator were already on the streets.

The leaflets were being clutched at by nervous, trembling hands, and they were being read in silence. It was as if the town was frozen in anticipation of something still more terrible, something still more tragic.

"Government Bulletin". Emergency issue:

On this day, March 1st when the Tsar was returning from inspecting the guard, an attemt was made on the sacred life of His Majesty when two shells were thrown on the embankment of the Yekaterininsky Canal, near the garden of the Mikhailovsky Palace. The first of these damaged His Majesty's coach. The second explosion severely wounded the Tsar. On returning to the Winter Palace His Majesty received the last rites and then passed away at 3:35 in the afternoon....

Sergei Tatishchev--Russian diplomat and historian:

When the Imperial coach moved off from Mikhailovsky Palace at 2:15 p.m., Sofia Perovskaya gave a signal to this effect to those who were to throw the bombs, by waving her headscarf.

The coach moved quickly along the embankment of the Yekaterininsky Canal and had already gone past Rysakov, when he threw the first bomb. That was followed by a terrible explosion.

The Tsar after descending from the coach moved over to the site of the explosion.... The second assassin, Grinevitsky, who had been standing leaning against nearby railings, threw his bomb at the very moment when the Tsar was moving past him, and it landed right under his feet. Then came a second deafening explosion.

From the will of Ignaty Grinevitsky, killed by the explosion on the embankment of the Yekaterininsky Canal:

...Alexander II must die. His days are numbered... He shall die and together with him we shall perish, his enemies and assassins.

This is essential for the cause of freedom, because through this act we shall shake the very foundations of what crafty people refer to as the absolute monarchy, and we know as despotism....

I shall not be called upon to take part in the final struggle. Fate has condemned me to an early death, and I shall not see Victory. I shall not live for a single day or even hour in that age of radiant triumph, but I consider that through my death I will do all that I should have done and that no one on this earth can demand more of me.

From the Executive Committee of the Narodnaya Volya, March 1, 1881:

The Ex[ecutive] Com[mittee] considers it essential to remind the public that on several occasions it warned the deceased tyrant, and on several occasions exhorted him to put a stop to his inhumane and arbitrary rule and

restore to Russia her natural rights. It is common knowledge that the tyrant chose to disregard these warnings and to pursue his former policies. He was not even prepared to desist from executions. The Ex[ecutive] Com[mittee] never abandoned the principle of armed action and resolved to execute the despot whatever might happen. On March 1st this resolution was carried out.

WAITING

V. I. Dmitrieva—a writer:

Terrible, grim days followed. The black-bordered newspapers were full of details of what had happened. Numerous arrests were announced. Those arrested included Zhelyabov, Perovskaya, Kibalchich, Gelfman, Trigoni.... Sablin shot himself. It was complete turmoil.... No one understood what was going on, until it became known that it was Rysakov who was giving them away.

Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev, Paris, March 1881:

Not only in Russia but in the whole of Europe people are waiting anxiously to learn what the first steps of the new Tsar will be, so that they can try at least to guess what stand he will adopt, what his future intentions will be and what will be the overall tone of his reign....

Those who expect a parliamentary constitution from the new Tsar will soon be stripped of their illusions—I for one at least am firmly convinced of this.... Ideas of limited power

for the monarch that are universally accepted in Europe were alien to Russia and will remain so for a long time to come.[241]

Pyotr Kropotkin:

Desperate panic gripped court circles in St. Petersburg. Alexander III, who, despite his colossal height, was not a brave man, refused to reside in the Winter Palace and moved out of the capital to Gatchina, the palace of his great-grandfather Paul I. I know that ancient pile, surrounded by moats and ringed with watch-towers for protection and complete with secret staircases leading to the Tsar's study. I saw the hatchway in that study through which it is possible to throw an uninvited enemy into the water and onto the sharp stones below, and also the secret staircases which lead down into the underground dungeons and the underground passage leading to the lake.

Meanwhile an underground gallery complete with automatic electric apparatus, designed to stop revolutionaries trying to dig their way in, was being constructed round the Anichkov Palace, where Alexander III was to live prior to his accession.

K. P. Pobedonostsev, Attorney-General of the Synod, in a letter to Alexander III, March 11, 1881:

Dear Imperial Majesty,

...Precisely in these troubled days no precautions you might take would be superfluous. For Heaven's sake, I entreat you to take into consideration the following points:

1. When you are making ready to sleep, make sure the door is locked behind you—not only in the bedroom, but also in all the rooms leading off it, as far as the entrance hall. A person enjoying your complete trust should carefully inspect the locks and that the bolts on the inside of folding doors have been pushed too.

2. It is essential to check every evening before you go to bed that the wires for all the bells are in working order. They can easily be cut.

3. Make sure that everything is in order every evening, by looking under the furniture.

4. One of your adjutants must spend the night near you, in your suite of rooms.

5. Are all those in your immediate entourage to be trusted? If anybody calls forth even the slightest doubt, it will be possible to find a pretext for him to be transferred. In ten or fifteen days it will be possible to shed a good deal of light on what has happened, but until then I entreat you in the name of God to be careful every minute of the day!

Sofia Perovskaya—in a letter to her mother. March 22, 1881:

My dearest, I beg you not to be too anxious, and do not torture yourself on my behalf: spare yourself for the sake of all those around you and for my sake as well. I do not grieve in the slightest about my fate and I'm quite calm, because I knew and expected that sooner or later events would follow this course. Indeed, dearest Mamma, all is not so grim as it might seem to you. I lived in such a

way as my convictions prompted me to, and I was unable to go against those convictions, and for that reason I can now await everything that is to come with a calm conscience....

In my thoughts I eagerly kiss your hands and on my knees I beg you not to be angry at me. Another request I would make to you, dearest Mamma, is that you should buy me a collar and cuffs that can be attached with buttons, because we are not allowed to use studs; I also need a collar that is tighter, because at the trial I need to look suitably dressed and my clothes look the worse for wear here....

Your Sonya[242]

THE TRIAL

The special committee of the ruling Senate for the judgement of treason cases, March 26, 1881:

The meeting opened at 11:00 a.m. with an announcement of the case to be considered, involving the defendants—Rysakov, Mikhailov, Gelfman, Perovskaya, Kibalchich and Zhelyabov—accused of treason against the state.

Extract from the speech for the prosecution delivered by N. V. Muravyov, the acting Public Prosecutor, at the special committee of the ruling Senate:

The false teachings of the socialist revolutionary party, its wicked acts and the party itself are alien to our Russian soil. Its point of

departure and the basic principles of its doctrine have no roots in the conditions found in Russia today. Socialism came into being in the West and for a long time now has constituted for it a disaster of historic proportions. In our country there was no soil in which socialism might take root and, thanks be to God, there is not yet either any antagonism between the classes of society, nor a dominant bourgeoisie, nor traditional strife and conflict between society and the authorities. The masses of the Russian people, many millions strong, will not take up socialist ideas.... Supporters of the new teaching in our country are those who would not be able to find a niche for themselves anywhere, were it not for socialism, nor any occupation for themselves, any food or anything to think about. The enormous advance, intellectual, social and economic called into being by the great reforms of our great Tsar-martyr raised up and led forward all elements of Russian society, shaking it from top to bottom. Yet now that that ferment has had time to settle, it has to be admitted that in the course of the process some highly undersirable off-shoots of that advance have emerged, off-shoots that have set themselves apart from the old order, not allied themselves to any new one but that will stop at nothing. People have come on to the scene who have no moral principles and no real ideas or inner resources, but who are most receptive to all foreign influences from outside Russia, wanting only that it promises them a wide, easy and alluring scope for action that flatters their ambition and demands

no modest or thankless labour. People have come on to the scene who are able, because they have nothing better to do or do not wish to do anything else, to do nothing other than "make" revolution.... The Russian people shall pull out these weeds from Russian soil complete with their roots and go forth, cheerfully united by an indestructible, sacred hope and shall follow their noble leader who has acceded to the throne. The countless ranks of our right-thinking citizens will march forward together in brotherly love, shoulder to shoulder.[243]

From the speech delivered by Andrei Zhelyabov:

...If you, your Honours, were to look at the accounts of political trials, at that open book on life, you would see that those who embraced the cause of the Russian people did not always operate with shells, that in our society there was a time of youthful radiant dreams, and that if that time has past it is not we who are to blame ... we, after trying out various methods for working to promote the good of the people, focussed our attention in the early seventies on one particular method: we concentrated on the position of the working man, aiming to propagate socialist ideas by peaceful means. This movement was so inoffensive in its methods and how did it end? It collapsed purely because of the numerous obstacles encountered by way of prisons and sentences of exile. The movement was entirely bloodless and rejected violence: this movement that was peaceful, not revolutionary was crushed....

My task as an individual and the purpose of my life was to work for the public good. For a long time I worked towards this end using peaceful means, and only later did I find myself obliged to turn to violence. It was not in accordance with my principles to embrace that violent form of struggle, but there was no chance to engage in a struggle using only peaceful means, i.e. a peaceful struggle involving the peaceful propaganda of my ideas, and the peaceful organisation of those who shared those ideas.[244]

From the speech delivered by Nikolai Kibalchich:

I followed closely the speech of the Public Prosecutor, in particular the way in which he defined the factors bringing the revolutionary movement into being and this is the conclusion I've drawn from his speech: reforms took place, all elements within society were shaken up, and, as a result, a worthless scum formed which had nothing to do and, so as to have something to occupy itself with, it proceeded to invent revolution. That is the approach the Public Prosecutor adopts to this question. Now with regard to the question as to how best to ensure that the sad events well known to all should not be repeated, he recommends as a reliable means to this end no indulgence of any sort, but instead punishment and more punishment. I cannot unfortunately agree with the Public Prosecutor that the means he recommends would lead to the desired results.

Then with regard to my private affair I

should like to point out one thing that my defence counsel referred to. I have designed an airship and I am of the opinion that it would have been quite possible to build. I submitted to the court a detailed exposition of that project complete with diagrams and calculations. Probably I shall not have the possibility of listening to the opinions of the experts with regard to that project and I shall not be in a position to learn what becomes of it or perhaps even to forestall the possibility of someone using my project, so I shall now announce publicly that this project of mine and the drawings for it made by me are in the keeping of Mr. Gerard.[2 4 5]

Senator Fuks:
The defendants conducted themselves in a self-possessed manner and with the utmost calm.

The special committee of the ruling Senate for the judgement of treason cases, March 28-29, 1881:
At twenty past six in the morning on March 29th the members of the special committee of the ruling Senate appeared in the conference hall and the Senator in charge announced the following resolution:
In accordance with the decree of his Imperial Majesty, the ruling Senate, at its special meeting for the judgement of treason cases, after hearing this case and pleadings, has pronounced that the defendants ... Zhelyabov ... Perovskaya ... Kibalchich ... Rysakov ...

Gelfman ... and Mikhailov ... should be deprived of all rights to property and sentenced to death by hanging.

EXECUTION

L. N. Tolstoy:

... The trial of the Tsar's assassins and the execution being prepared for them have made an impression upon me stronger than almost anything else I have ever experienced. I couldn't stop thinking about them: not so much about them, as about those who are making ready for their murder and in particular about Tsar Alexander III. It is strikingly clear to me what joyful emotions he would experience, if he were to pardon them. I could not believe that they would be executed, but at the same time I was frightened for and anxious about their killers. I remember how I lay down upon a leather couch with that thought and unexpectedly began to fall asleep: in my dream or half-dream I was thinking about them and their murder which was being prepared. I felt all this so keenly that it was as if I had been awake all the time. It was as if I was being executed rather than they, and as if not Alexander III, with his executioners and judges, was killing them, but I was doing so instead, and that was how I came to wake up because of a nightmare. There and then I wrote this letter.[246]

S. A. Tolstaya:

In response to that letter Alexander III

gave instructions for Count Lev Tolstoy to be informed that if the assassination attempt had been made on his own life, he might have granted a pardon, but he was not entitled to pardon his father's murderers.[247]

K. P. Pobedonostsev in a letter to Alexander III, March 30, 1881:

There is an opinion which fills me with horror. People's minds have become so twisted that they now see it as admissible to commute sentences of capital punishment for convicted criminals. Fear is already rife among Russian people that misguided ideas might be presented to your Majesty and convince you that you should pardon the criminals.

Alexander III on K. P. Pobedonostsev's letter:

Rest assured that no one would dare to approach me with such proposals and that all six will be executed. That I guarantee.

A Government Announcement:

Today April 3rd at 9 o'clock the following state criminals will be put to death by hanging: noblewoman Sofia Perovskaya, a priest's son Nikolai Kibalchich, the petty bourgeois Nikolai Rysakov, and peasants Andrei Zhelyabov and Timofei Mikhailov. As regards the petty bourgeois Gelfman, her execution will, in view of her pregnancy, be delayed until after her delivery.

Extract from the Official Account of the Execution:

At ten minutes to eight the gates leading

from the building where prisoners are held up to their trial on Shpalernaya Street were opened and a few minutes later there drove out the first special open cart drawn by two horses. It contained the two criminals Zhelyabov and Rysakov, with their hands tied to their seats. On each man's chest there hung a black board on which was written in white "Murderer of the Tsar". Next there emerged from the same gate a second open cart carrying three criminals: Kibalchich, Perovskaya and Mikhailov.

After the criminals there followed three carriages in which there rode five Orthodox priests in mourning chasubles, with crosses in their hands. These five Orthodox priests who were there to provide final counsel for the condemned criminals had been in the prison for defendants approximately since seven o'clock in the evening yesterday. Rysakov had willingly received the priest and had a long talk with him, made his confession and received the sacrament. Mikhailov had also received a priest, had quite a long talk with him, made his confession but refused to receive the sacrament. Kibalchich had had an argument with a priest on two occasions during the night but refused to make his confession or receive the sacrament: in the end he had asked the priest to leave him. Zhelyabov and Sofia Perovskaya had refused categorically to receive a member of the clergy....

The open carts were surrounded by troops as the criminals were driven along streets thronged with people. When the carts arrived

at their destination officials and members of the Public Prosecutor's staff took up their places on the platform. (A small platform for persons from the judiciary and police department had been set up at a distance of eight or nine feet from the scaffold. Representatives of the highest echelons of the military and the judiciary, along with correspondents for Russian and foreign newspapers, the military attaché from the Italian Embassy and a number of junior members of embassy staffs were standing on this platform while the executions were being carried out.)[248]

From an announcement made by the Executive Committee of the Narodnaya Volya party on April 4, 1881:

...So the new reign has revealed its face. The first act to be perpetrated by the autocratic will of Alexander III was the command to hang the women. Without even waiting for his coronation his throne was stained with the blood of fighters for the people's rights.

So be it!

Over the fresh grave of our dear comrades, we, for our part, pledge for all to hear that we shall continue to work for the emancipation of the people. Gallows shall not hold us back on this path....

Andrei Breitfuss—a participant of the revolutionary movement:

A few years afterwards I visited the Preobrazhenskoye Cemetery together with comrades from the revolutionary circle.... We thought we would look for the common grave

of the martyrs of March 1. When we encountered an old gravedigger, in return for a tip he led us to a fence at the back of the cemetery, where there was a heap of all sorts of rubbish and old withered wreaths taken from the graves: pointing in the direction of that heap he said: "That was where we buried those poor fellows. I dug the pit for them." There was no mound above the grave to be seen. In a nearby field we wove from wild flowers a large wreath which we then hung on the fence above the grave.... Maybe that was the first wreath at that spot in the cemetery that had not been thrown there with rubbish but laid at the grave of those we hold so dear, by men who today still hold in deep respect the memory of those great fighters from the Narodnaya Volya.

* * *

The trial of March 1, 1881 was conducted in public. Most of the documents relating to it were familiar to the reading public in Russia and abroad. Documents relating to the first inquiry and all materials pertaining to the preliminary investigation were not however revealed to the public. After they had been examined by the special committee of the ruling Senate for the judgement of treason cases, they were duly numbered, filed and handed into the Senate archives. The doors of this, as those of other highly secret archives could only be opened thirty-six years later, when the tsarist autocracy was overthrown.

But the indictment and minutes of the trial

were printed in the *Pravitelstvenny Vestnik* (Government Bulletin) and according to its text by other daily publications as well: these documents were printed on the front pages and attracted general attention. The more detailed report of the trial consisting of 140 pages in two columns was published in a special supplement to the *Istorichesky Vestnik* (Historical News), a journal which was regularly read by the Ulyanov family.

It was to be the last political trial in Russia of which detailed reports were published. The next trial six years later of Alexander Ulyanov and his comrades—the "Second March 1st"—would only be reported in connection with its results: the sentence and the carrying out of that sentence. The minutes of that trial would however be printed, but in a very limited number of copies, specially for highly-placed government officials. A historian and witness of those times was to write: "This step to limit the publicity given to the trial was taken in the interests of upholding public order, so that readers, especially the younger ones, would not be able to acquaint themselves with the speeches, sometimes rather fiery, of the defendants and with their revolutionary doctrines."

The trial relating to the events of March 1, 1881, as was pointed out by many contemporaries, made an even greater impact on the public than the actual assassination of Alexander II. The speeches by Zhelyabov and other revolutionaries at the trial testified to their courageous loyalty to their ideals and their readiness to sacrifice themselves, so that

those ideals might triumph. Zasulich maintained that in no other country in a similar era "was there such readiness to make the supreme sacrifice so that liberty and brotherhood might triumph", as that shown by the handful of Narodnaya Volya revolutionaries "in their combat with the all-powerful autocrat who had at his disposal the far-flung administrative machine, the armed forces, the police and the ignorant oppressed masses".

Paying due homage to those heroes of March 1st, Lenin wrote: "They displayed supreme self-sacrifice and astonished the whole world by the heroism of their terrorist methods of struggle. Their sacrifices were certainly not in vain. They doubtlessly contributed—directly or indirectly—to the subsequent revolutionary education of the Russian people. But they did not, and could not, achieve their immediate aim of generating a people's revolution."[249] They, indeed, could not achieve their aim. We are all mindful of the links in the historic chain of the Russian revolutionary movement. "The Decembrists awakened Herzen", then his revolutionary agitation "was taken up, extended, strengthened and tempered by the revolutionary raznochintsy[250]—from Chernyshevsky to the heroes of the Narodnaya Volya.... 'The young helmsmen of the gathering storm' is what Herzen called them."[251]

The heroes of March 1, 1881 proved through their intrepid fearlessness that no amount of oppression could uproot or hold back the advance of the revolutionary movement. This fact was grasped by many people,

even those close to the court. On the second day after Alexander II had been assassinated, the St. Petersburg newspaper *Strana* (Our Country), that was known for its liberal rather than reactionary sympathies, published an article recalling the precautions that had been taken after Karakozov's shots had rung out: "Every house was searched, in front of every house there sat a janitor nignt and day, pickets patrolled round the Palace, there was a clamp-down on the press, the Zemstvos were trampled into the ground, hundreds of people were excluded from the universities and the Chancellery was in charge of everything, tight-lipped and impervious to any 'currents' of popular opinion. So it had been since 1866. It would have been impossible to go any further than the authorities went at that time, without actually closing down the schools, newspapers, Zemstvos and even the courts. However as a sequel to all this there came Solovyov, the explosion on the railway near Moscow, the explosion under the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, and finally the maiming of the Tsar and his bleeding to death."

In those grim March days of 1881 detailed publications began to appear in other newspapers as well, but then it all ground to a standstill. The Minister of the Interior, Mikhail Loris-Melikov, warned the editors that if articles appeared mentioning the need for a constitution then the publications concerned would be closed down. During the March in question publication of the newspapers *Molva* (Rumours) and *Smolensky Vestnik* was suspended, a warning was issued to

Golos (The Voice) and *Zemstvo*, while the *St. Peterburgskiye Vedomosti* (St. Petersburg Gazette) was brought to trial.

Yet the flame that was to set the public's conscience alight had been lit. People were turning over in their minds what had happened—each one in his own way, but all men everywhere, without exception. The reports of the trial relating to the March 1st assassination were read by all those who could make out the words in those reports, even if only letter by letter or syllable by syllable. That trial was the event uppermost in all men's minds.

Nor was the Ulyanov family an exception to the rule. Vladimir was almost eleven at the time and, as Krupskaya was to write, "events like the assassination of Alexander II, that everyone was talking about and discussing, could not fail to stir the young". It was precisely from that moment that young Vladimir Ulyanov began to take an interest in politics, and feel the urge to form his own opinions about what was happening around him. As Lenin said, after that he "began to pay keen attention to all political conversations".

News of the tsar's assassination came as a heavy blow to Ilya Nikolayevich. Anna Ilyinichna wrote: "For him, a man who had spent the best years of his youth in the reign of Nicholas I, the reign of Alexander II, particularly the early part, had been a period of radiant hope and he was opposed to terror". Ilya Nikolayevich understood that the age of reforms had passed and that during his life-

time at least that thaw and spring of hope would never be repeated. He sensed that grim times lay ahead, when even straightforward zeal and honesty would appear suspect.

Anna tried to start up a conversation with her father about what had happened, but he did not respond, preferring to remain silent and keep his thoughts to himself. Whether Ilya Nikolayevich talked to his favourite child Alexander on the subject, was a question to which no one else in the family knew the answer. Perhaps, he couldn't find the strength.... Dressed in his ceremonial uniform Ilya Nikolayevich set off bowed by grief to the cathedral for the requiem mass in honour of Alexander II. Young Vladimir had been struck by this and he was to recall later on: "I was struck to see how much Father was upset by the assassination of Alexander II...."

Yet it is not difficult to imagine that it was not only his regrets at the irrevocable passing of the age of reform and of the never-to-be-repeated sixties that made Ilya Nikolayevich so heavy of heart. His thoughts about what lay ahead, as was so often the case, were bound up with his concern for his children's future, for the paths in life that they would choose.

It should be stressed once more that Ilya Nikolayevich was against the path that involved violence and terror. That however did not necessarily mean that he took an equally negative view of those who set out along that path. The martyrs of March 1st were known as the "murderers of the Tsar" and they were referred to as "villains"—no less.

The most rabid in this respect was the acting Public Prosecutor at the special committee of the ruling Senate, the prosecutor at the trial concerning the March 1st assassination, Nikolai Muravyov. It was that very same Kolya, who had been a playmate of Sofia Perovskaya's as a child, who later referred to the defendants in the case as "outcasts", an "underground gang", "murderers", a "criminal secret society", "chiefs of robber bands", "impoverished good-for-nothings", "power-seeking ringleaders", a "gang of political assassins", "deniers of the faith", "opponents of morality", "merciless corrupters of youth", "champions of universal destruction and wild anarchy". "When human beings weep—Zhelyabovs laugh!"—and all this in the course of a single speech.

It goes without saying that the inconsistency and bias of such phrases were quite clear to Ilya Nikolayevich. He was worried about how the example of the March 1st heroes would move the hearts of young people. Nothing could hold back their noble strivings in the name of liberty—not even the scaffold: they were filled with a desire to help their people and sacrificed themselves in full knowledge of the consequences. Ilya Nikolayevich was also aware of the purity of and loyalty to their ideals that distinguished his children. After all he had had sufficient opportunities to appreciate that all that was out of the ordinary, bold and intelligent found itself in opposition to the Russian way of life, for which the tone was set by the autocracy and the bureaucracy. That was what worried him, and more and

more as the years went by.

Anna Ilyinichna recalled that her father used to talk with Alexander on social issues, yet when it came to his younger children "he never laid emphasis on any particular social ideals. At least I never heard him do so and I do not think I should have remained ignorant of such conversations".

...Ilya Nikolayevich returned from the cathedral after the requiem service for Alexander II, sadder than ever. Yet despite all his worries and the most dire presentiments, he could not have imagined what was to follow: that six years later Russia would experience a second March 1st, and that on that day inexorable tragedy would descend upon the Ulyanov family and that his eldest son would perish. By that time Alexander III would have forgotten what he had said on hearing of the letter from Tolstoy, namely that if the assassination attempt had been made on his own life, he might have granted a pardon.... No, he neither forgave them nor granted any pardon....

Many years later Vladimir Ulyanov was to comment that it was a good thing that his father had died before Alexander had been arrested, that he simply could not imagine what might have happened if he had still been alive.

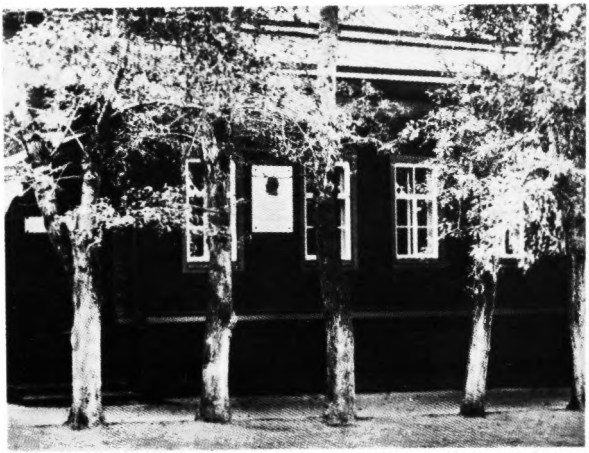
Tragedy Descends

The sense of foreboding that Ilya Nikolayevich had felt proved all too justified—times did indeed dawn, when straightforward zeal and honesty were viewed as suspect.... After the accession of Alexander III reaction was in full swing. Liberal Russian society, all those who considered themselves progressives, began to shed tears when these days of darkness set in. With reference to this period Lenin was to write: "We are past masters of the art of lamentation; we lament the tactlessness and self-assurance of revolutionaries in harassing the government; we lament the government's indecisiveness when, finding that it is not confronted by a real force, it makes pseudo-concessions and takes back with one hand what it has given with the other; we lament 'the age without ideas and ideals', when the government, having settled scores with revolutionaries whom the people failed to support, hastens to make up for lost time and fortifies itself for a fresh onslaught."[252]

As before the Director of Elementary Schools was making long journeys through the gubernia, not neglecting a single school,

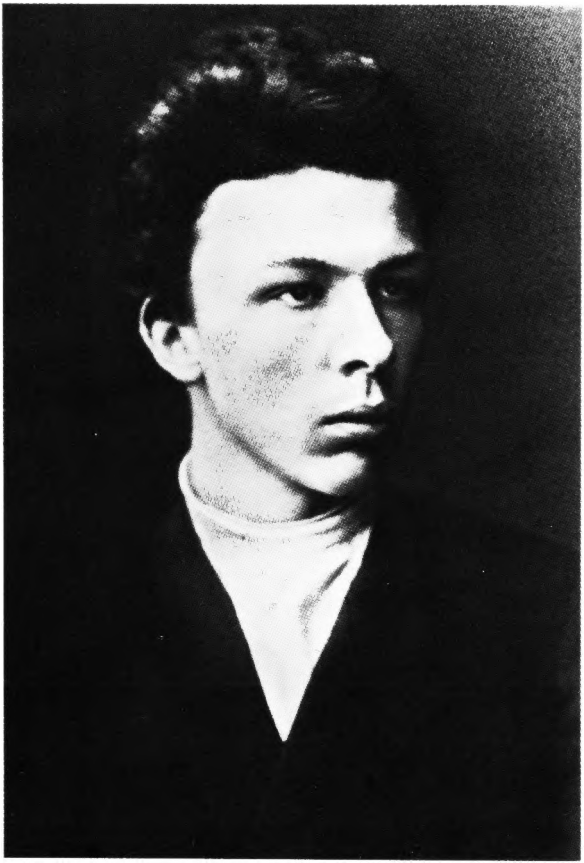
The Ulyanov family: Maria Alexandrovna and Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov, and their children: Olga, Maria, Alexander, Dmitri, Anna and Vladimir. Simbirsk, 1879

Simbirsk. 1870s



Simbirsk. The house on Moskovskaya Street where the Ulyanov family lived from 1878 to 1887

Lenin, a student of the gymnasium.
1880s



Alexander Ulyanov, a student. 1880s

Nikolai Nekrasov. 1860s

Vissarion Belinsky. 1840s

Nikolai Dobrolyubov. 1860s

Alexander Herzen. 1850s

The civil execution of Nikolai Chernyshevsky. 1864

Members of the Narodnaya Volya.
1870s

Andrei Zhelyabov

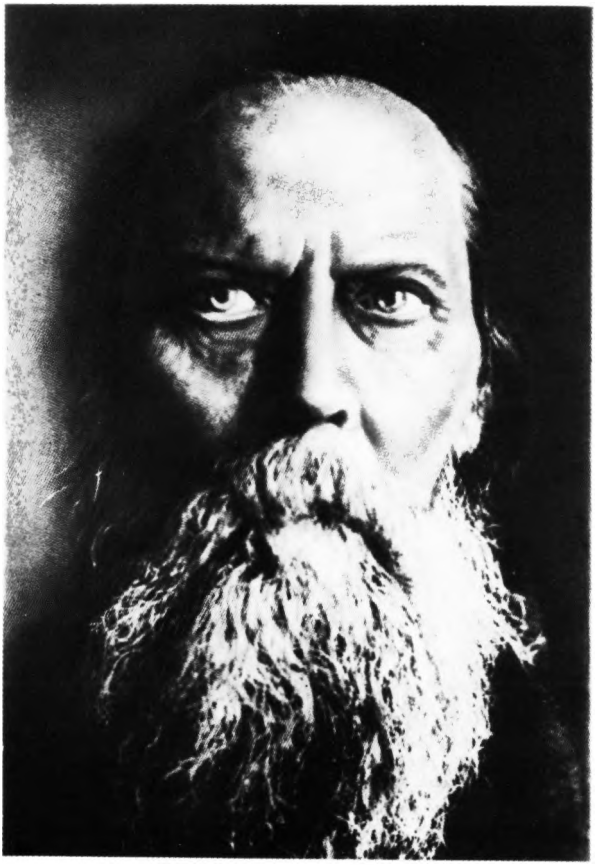
Sofia Perovskaya

Nikolai Kibalchich

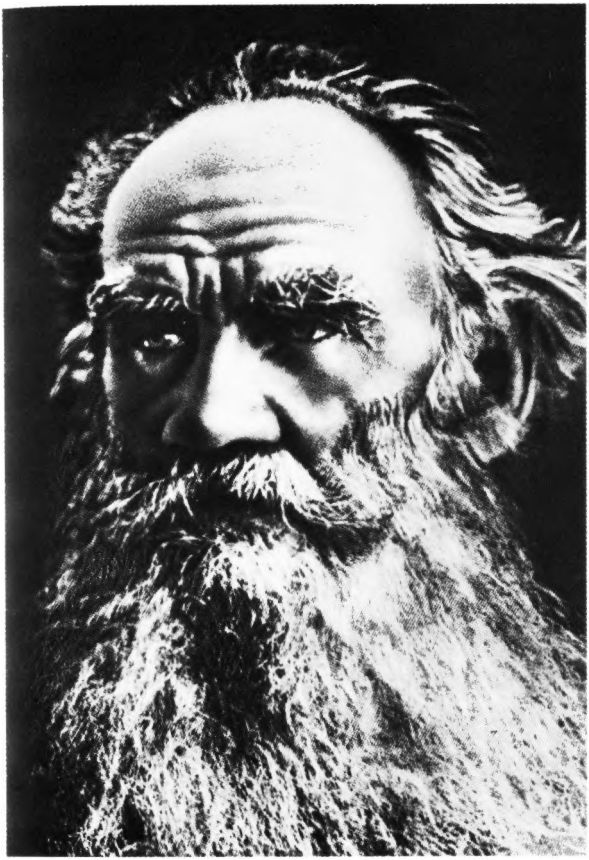
Stepan Khalturin

Dmitri Pisarev. 1860s

Ivan Turgenev. 1880s



Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin. 1880s



Lev Tolstoy. 1906

Lenin in Gorki

even in the most remote areas. Yet he was not deriving the same pleasure from his tours as before and was not finding the same inspiration in his work: he was aware of ever-decreasing support in his work.

As before during his business trips through the gubernia he would call on his good friend Valerian Nikanorovich at his Nazarievka estate in the village of Novo-Nikulino. Yet Ilya Nikolayevich did not experience the same enjoyment while talking to him: communicating with this man was no longer such a delightful experience.

During one of the visits paid him by Ilya Nikolayevich Nazariev showed his friend his article "The Backwoods of Today" cut out from the newspaper *Vestnik Yevropy* which he had had specially bound as a gift. When presenting it to Ulyanov, Valerian Nikanorovich said: "In this article I tried above all to give a faithful picture of our work for the schools and to commend your hard work, Ilya Nikolayevich."

"I am most sincerely grateful, dear Valerian Nikanorovich," replied Ulyanov, reading the dedication that Nazariev had written inside.

It read: "To dear I. N. Ulyanov, in memory of our shared labours, worries, setbacks and happiness in setting up village schools in Simbirsk Uyezd. V. Nazariev—October 24, 1876, village of Novo-Nikulino."

As they talked the two men were leaning with their backs against the tiles of a Dutch stove so as to keep warm. There were no lights to be seen through the windows, with

curtains raised, nothing apart from the blanket of the damp autumn night, that was without any light or stars. However a man might try, there was nothing to be picked out in the darkness. It was the same with the future. It was impossible to gain any clear or distinct picture of what would be happening further away than tomorrow. Could Nazariev have imagined that evening that the Ulyanovs would look after his present with great care so that it would survive all the disasters and moves that were to beset them? Indeed over forty years later his article would finally come to rest on the Kremlin office shelves of the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin). It is possible that the article was opened on a good many occasions when discussions were going on in that office about the organisation of schools in Soviet Russia....

In the early eighties everything that had inspired and encouraged Ulyanov and Nazariev began to seem more and more like happy memories. Nazariev's article which related in such ecstatic terms how Ilya Nikolayevich was succeeding in opening new schools and building good solid premises for them now had a ring of history about it. By now their concern was not how to extend the work already begun but how to preserve what had already been accomplished. By that time Valerian Nikanorovich was speaking and writing in a different tone from that which he had used before: "The uncertainty about how all this will turn out and what we are moving towards is becoming more and more

difficult to bear. Society is in the grip of tense but futile anticipation of New People, new people of action. Yet this autumn fog wraps us all round with an impenetrable blanket of darkness.... Perhaps spring in the life of the nations is never to be repeated...."

Knowing Ilya Nikolayevich well as he did, Nazariev realised that under this new regime it would not be easy for Ulyanov to remain out of trouble. The important thing at this stage was not to make life difficult for anyone with his proposals, not to pester anyone, not to insist on anything, not to express one's own opinions too forcefully and best of all not to have any opinions at all. Yet Valerian Nikanorovich's friend was born to engage in upright labours and was happy only when he could see that he was moving forward towards his goal. Eight years later when Ilya Nikolayevich had already died, in 1894, Nazariev published an article in the *Simbirskiye Vedomosti* entitled: "From the Springtime Memories of a Member of the Simbirsk Uyezd Schools Council": "What was happening in his own home, how the household was run, where his new uniforms sprang from to replace the old ones that had fallen into a state of total disrepair, how fresh handkerchiefs appeared in his pocket, what his children were doing and how they were getting along—that was all something Ulyanov never had to concern himself with thanks to the solicitude of his energetic wife."

Anna Ilyinichna protested once again that it was quite untrue to make out that Ilya Nikolayevich did not know what was

happening in his own home, and what his children were doing, or how they were getting along. She would have us remember that Nazariev "visited us only on rare occasions and had few opportunities to see our father surrounded by his family, and as is clear from the article in question knew little about his relationships with us, his children...". In 1894 Anna Ulyanova was to publish in that same *Simbirskiye Vedomosti* a reply to the original article entitled: "In answer to V. Nazariev's Article...".

"Naturally complex and serious work only allows a man, who takes his obligations and duties very coscientiously and moreover loves what he is doing, to devote comparatively little time to his family, but this does not mean that he forgets about it completely. Probably it would be more accurate to marvel at his tireless energy, considering the fact that the upbringing of his children was something that proceeded under his vigilant supervision and that it was something of which he was always in charge. Looked at from another angle how would it have been possible for such an ardent and committed teacher, as our father was shown to be in Mr. Nazariev's article, to neglect the upbringing of his own children."

Why should Anna Ulyanova choose to engage in an argument with Nazariev? His intention was to convey as vividly as possible the work that Ulyanov had carried out in the sphere of education. It would appear that he had succeeded but to the detriment of showing Ulyanov as a family man. Anna Ulyanova

wrote that the "first demand to be made of any biographer is that his material should correspond to the truth". Yet were there adequate grounds for her to see herself as dutybound to write a reply to the article and insist that it should be published in the paper?

Let us first recall when it was that Anna Ulyanova published her letter. This fact should not be overlooked—it was in the year 1894. Alexander Ilyich had already been executed; Anna Ilyinichna and her brother Vladimir had already been arrested and banished from the city, and were subject to police surveillance. Talk about their father, who was too busy to take a close interest in the affairs of his family and had no idea what his children's preoccupations were, could not have sounded anything but hurtful for the Ulyanovs at that time. The universally respected Full Councillor of State had been working so selflessly for the good of society, that his children had in their turn not been brought up with due care—this implied state of affairs could be used to explain for the unthinking man in the street the subsequent highly regrettable steps taken by those very same children.... In contesting Nazariev's account Anna Ilyinichna was protesting against any attempt to drive a wedge between the children and their father, to rob them of their natural family ties....

When the age of reaction set in, reaction that Lenin was to term "unbridled, incredibly senseless and brutal",[253] Ilya Nikolayevich experienced feelings which are fami-

liar probably to all fathers. "As the years pass it is only natural to be worried not so much about myself—now that my life is half over—but rather about the children, to be concerned by the inevitable question as to what the unknown future holds in store for them. All periods of time pass by, but they are taking lives with them as they do," Ilya Nikolayevich used to muse. "What lay in store for Sasha, Volodya, Mitya, and what fate awaites my daughters? How should we protect our children from disasters and mistakes, how should we explain to them that even the dark period would pass eventually?"... In the Ulyanov family, just as in any other, the children were growing up and the parents were growing older.

Documents and Eyewitnesses Testify

BLACK DAYS

In those far-off years of stagnation,
All hearts were filled with sleep and gloom:
Pobedonostsev over Russia
Had spread the owl-like wings of doom,
And there was neither day nor night—
Only the shadow of vast wings....

Alexander Blok[254]

1881

From an Imperial Manifesto:

We, Alexander III, Emperor and Autocrat of all Russia, Tsar of Poland and Grand

Prince of Finland etc., etc., etc. We make a pronouncement to all our loyal subjects. God in his inscrutable wisdom saw fit to conclude the glorious reign of our beloved Father with a martyr's death, and to entrust to us the sacred duty of the autocratic ruler....

While dedicating our person to this great service, we call upon all our loyal subjects to serve us and the state loyally and truly, to help root out base sedition which brings dishonour upon Russian soil, to help consolidate faith and morality, bring up our children in accordance with proper principles and to eliminate falsehood and theft, so that order and truth might come into their own once more in those insitutions bestowed upon Russia by its benefactor, our beloved Father....

"Moskovskiye Vedomosti" (Moscow Gazette), April 30, 1881:

Now we can breathe freely. Faintheartedness and all manner of sedition are at an end.... The people in their hearts were waiting for their Tsar's words, like manna from heaven. It is in those words that our salvation lies. They mark the restoration to the Russian people of a Russian autocratic Tsar.

Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin:

There is little doubt that the journal *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* will cease to exist in two or three months time, indeed we may well be advised to leave St. Petersburg.... Banishment? I doubt whether it will come to that, but we will be advised to leave, for

example, to Tver (a liberal piece of advice in that it is not very far away) and there to keep silent—that step is quite within the bounds of possibility. And no one will notice it. Initially of course there will be whisperings, but within two or three months they will be heard no more. In this respect Chernyshevsky provides the classic example—who remembers him nowadays? What is more, the situation will go on like this for a long time because this pit is so full, that even if it were to be cleaned for a hundred years, there would still be work for another hundred.[255]

1882

Edicts bearing the Royal Signature:

The Minister of the Interior ... Count Ignatiev is most graciously relieved of his post at his own request for reasons of ill health....

...Count Tolstoy is graciously commanded to take up the post of Minister of the Interior....

E. A. Peretts, State Secretary of the State Council:

...Count Dmitri Andreyevich was very happy at the trust shown in him, but before taking up the post offered to him, Tolstoy deemed it his duty to warn his Majesty of the fact that he was extremely unpopular. "I know," replied the Tsar. "However that does not disturb me. I appoint as ministers

men whom I trust and from whom I expect benefit for Russia. Popularity is not something I take into consideration."

A. P. Korba, participant in the revolutionary movement:

It was on that morning when the inhabitants of St. Petersburg first learnt from their morning newspapers that the former Minister of Public Education, Tolstoy, had been appointed Minister of the Interior.... Mikhail Yevgrafovich (Saltykov-Shchedrin—*Ed.*) appeared ... holding in his hand an issue of the *Pravitelstvenny Vestnik* (Government Bulletin). His first words were: "Have you read it, have you read it?" He was beside himself with fury. "How," he shouted, "could they appoint that gaoler, who with his ridiculous 'classical' methods dispatched dozens of young men to the next world, and who now will put the whole of Russia in fetters to rob her of all rights and to cow her into obedience!" After a short pause he shouted out louder than ever: "They'll fail! A game as risky as that will never be won! They will lose!"[256]

1883

"Peterburgskaya Gazeta" (St. Petersburg Gazette), August 24:

Yesterday on Tuesday, August 23, at two o'clock in the morning, our great writer Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev passed away in Boujival near Paris.

Alexander III on hearing a report of Turgenev's demise: One nihilist less.

V. K. Pleve, Director of the Police Department, to Verzhbolovo, Pskov, Vilno, September 21st, Telegraph message:

...in connection with the transport of the body of the deceased writer Turgenev via the rail route passing through Verzhbolovo, Vilno and St. Petersburg, particularly thorough steps are to be taken to ensure that this does not become public knowledge and that no ceremonial functions are arranged.

From the Police Department file headed "On the Funeral of Turgenev":

The funeral is to be held on a weekday and all ceremonies are due to be completed by four o'clock.... No flags are to be displayed nor may any houses be decked out in mourning.... A reinforced police detachment will remain at the cemetery, until such time as the whole crowd disperses, and in addition a police detachment and plain-clothes agents will be instructed to remain on watch at the cemetery for the two days immediately after the funeral.

1884

From a Government Communiqué, April 20th:

Some periodicals bear the serious responsibility for the events of recent years that have caused such despondency right through our society. The freedom made available to the press was exploited for the propagation of

theories that were contradictory to the basic principles of this state and its society and, as is well known, the propagation of such theories to the immature masses of the population has not been slow to bear fruit....

In accordance with these considerations at a meeting of the Ministers of the Interior, Public Education and Justice and the Attorney General of the Holy Synod ... it was decided that the publication of the journal *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* (Fatherland Notes) should cease forthwith.

Saltykov-Shchedrin:

The most talented of men used to come to the office of *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* as to their own homes despite my unsociable nature and lack of charming manners. I was trusted for my tact and good sense and no one made a murmur if I changed or corrected anything. In *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* there were weak contributions but never stupid ones....[257]

Nikolai Belogolovy—a progressive public figure and close friend of Saltykov-Shchedrin:

This blow for Saltykov was of course a very hurtful one ... but far more hurtful was the disappointment he suffered at the hands of society: not only did he not find any signs of sympathy, which he had every right to expect, but large numbers of those, who had at one time been his passionate admirers, now began to avoid him, as if he had the plague. It came to his ears how, among other things, his work had even been

vilified by the city of Tver, once famous for its liberal spirit. A few years ago the Zemstvo had set up a local museum and soon after its official opening it had been decided to exhibit a bust of Saltykov in one of the halls there, seeing that this famous son of Tver was the city's pride and glory. The bust had been exhibited until the time when the wrath of the government had descended upon the journal *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*. No sooner however had the storm broken over the head of Saltykov, than the Chairman of the Tver Municipal Council (who prior to that had personally expressed his rapturous admiration for the writer's talent on several occasions) proposed to the Committee administering the museum that the bust be removed and stored henceforth in the attic in view of the fact it portrayed such a disloyal individual.[258]

* * *

It would be possible to trace the various stages of the reign of Alexander III year by year and everything which occurred during that time would provide an example of rampant reaction and provide testimony to that reaction. Meanwhile the autocrat himself who was safely protected from public opinion and felt quite free of it, remained convinced that he was ruling in such a way as to promote "the good of the Empire". Many books were at the time being removed from public libraries—including some works of Leskov,[259] Hugo's *Les Misérables* and also the works of

Lev Tolstoy. The Emperor declared to Tolstoy's wife, Sofia Andreyevna, that he "would look through her husband's works personally". At the same time Alexander III was "astonished" to think that Pushkin could have been writing as he did in the conditions of the strict censorship upheld by Nicholas I....

In one of his letters written in the summer of 1881 Saltykov-Shchedrin announced the depressing news to the effect that in St. Petersburg there had been instituted either a Holy or Salvation Force aimed at "wiping out nihilism, not ready to stop even at the removal of such personalities as Hartman, Kropotkin, etc.... This detachment was organised along the lines of a secret society, but subsidised by the State...". A month later Saltykov-Shchedrin was to read this Declaration addressed to the peasants of Simbirsk Gubernia, which originally appeared in the *Simbirskaya Zemskaya Gazeta*:

"Being anxious to carry out the duties of loyal subjects and to protect the ignorant people from sedition, we, the authors of this Declaration, have agreed amongst ourselves to club together and announce that every peasant, who arrests a plotter talking among the peasants about redistribution of the land and other illegal matters and hands over the plotter concerned to the authorities, will be given a *hundred roubles as soon as* he has handed over the trouble-maker to the authorities, money which we are sending with this Declaration to the editorial offices of the *Zemskaya Gazeta.*

"Many"

Saltykov-Shchedrin returns once again to the existence of this Holy Force, asking whether people had read about "the inauguration in Simbirsk of a secret society which is spending out a hundred roubles for every dissenter. Is not that in fact exactly the same?" With the sarcasm we have come to associate with this particular writer he began to contemplate the rapture that would spread throughout the whole of Simbirsk Gubernia after people had heard the appeal for the whole population to embark on hunting down all the local dissenters. "Sooner or later our arms will be twisted and then the price of blood will be set for us, namely 100 roubles."

Yet it was not for nothing that Simbirsk was known as the "nobleman on the Volga". The time had come for a restless mood among the former serfs and the old-established landowners of Simbirsk were now a march ahead of all the rest—they were out to show their true colours! In this part of the world even the Director of Elementary Schools, constantly concerned as he was with improving the education of peasant children, might well come to represent a figure "impeding efforts to preserve the ignorant masses from sedition".

The *Simbirskaya Zemskaya Gazeta* did indeed for all intents and purposes number Ilya Nikolayevich among the dissenters. In two issues there appeared an article from an anonymous contributor—articles of this variety usually were unsigned—who declared that "the main and fundamental shortcoming of the elementary schools" was their "slave-

like adherence to all inventions of the latest teaching theories". Ilya Ulyanov was prepared to protest that what was offensively referred to as "inventions" was in fact the network of elementary schools itself, which the Russian intelligentsia had been working to build up for twenty years by then. The crux of the matter however lay in the fact that there was no one to make any protests or representations to. Everywhere people were saying that the time for enthusiasm was over and that the time for experimenting was at an end.

In 1884 a statute was adopted with regard to the parish schools, where children were only taught religion, how to read and write and the four basic functions in arithmetic. These schools were mounting a full-scale campaign against the elementary schools. In Simbirsk Gubernia, in the first two years alone after the passing of that statute, the number of parish schools increased seven times over. As for the elementary schools the vast majority of them were by this time headed by members of the clergy. A colleague of Ilya Nikolayevich, Inspector Krasev, acknowledged: "The local clergy is manifesting a rare degree of irritation at the rights enjoyed by the local inspectors of elementary schools and the activities they are engaging in. They are making out that we have an inadequate grasp of how to teach at schools and in general they are casting such aspersions on us that may well lead to our being out of favour at the present time."

Each elementary school in the gubernia

that had been cherished, built and opened by Ilya Nikolayevich, had become for him a landmark in the chronicle of his own life. Now in the Zemstvo reports the following comment was to be found with increasing frequency: "Certain secular schools should be closed as a result of church schools having been opened." How rapidly the edifice was crumbling into the sand, which Ilya Nikolayevich had seen as his life-work and vocation, all that he had taken pride in and lived for.

Yet if here in remote Simbirsk Gubernia the spirit of the times was making itself so keenly felt—that spirit which was making it almost impossible to breathe—what must have been happening in St. Petersburg? What thoughts must have been uppermost in the minds of the capital's young people? The student, the eldest son of the family, who had already been at the University there for over a year, was constantly in Ilya Nikolayevich's thoughts.

A new statute for the University had been adopted, designed to ban student organisations, do away with university autonomy and to set up a special inspectorate for the surveillance of students. There was talk everywhere of student unrest. Alexander sent to Simbirsk reassuring letters so that his parents should not be worried. Between the lines however there was a good deal else for them to read.

"Dear Papa! You have probably been worried after reading about the disturbances at Kiev and Moscow universities. Everything is quiet here so far, and there are no signs of unrest to be seen. There have been no changes

either. Only ... Assistant Professor Semevsky, a very good teacher of Russian history, will apparently not be giving any more lectures....” Who would be able to believe his words about an absence of “unrest” when on instructions of the Minister of Public Education popular professors were being dismissed.... Ilya Nikolayevich did not yet know at that time that three hundred students had signed a special letter expressing their sympathy for the historian Semevsky and that Alexander had been amongst them. Alexander, together with the other students concerned, listened to the remainder of Semevsky's lectures at his house, that came to be referred to as the “private university”... .

“My dear Papa and Mamma!... The effect of the new University Statute is beginning to make itself felt through its one positive off-shoot—the growing number of lecturers.” What might happen though if Ilya Nikolayevich's son were to start expressing similar ideas to other people, namely to the effect that the University Statute only had one good side. That would immediately be taken as implying that in all other respects it was bad, surely?

“Dear Papa and Mamma!... I have seen for the first time the new counsellor. He is an old general whose hair is already pure white. After greeting the students he conveyed to them more or less the following message: If you stick to your studies I hope that we shall coexist peacefully. So we can have our Voltaires but only those of sergeant-major calibre! He has been called upon to promote

the education of the youth and he introduces himself to us with threats like that..."

In the summer of 1885 Alexander Ulyanov—already a third-year student by this time—set off home for the holidays. He made his way down the Volga from Nizhni Novgorod to Simbirsk on a steamer.... The wheels were turning and the paddles slapping against the surface, just as if some playful boys were slapping their hands against the water. The nineteen-year-old boy would be looking over at the banks of the Volga sailing past him from the deck of the steamer, trying to pick out familiar places—that he had first seen as a child.

Alexander would have been looking forward to his reunion with his mother and father, with his sisters and brothers: with every fibre of his being he was longing to re-enter that house on Moskovskaya Street. Yet his thoughts were still centred on St. Petersburg—and indeed were hardly likely to have been torn away from it. Earlier things had been the other way round: during his first year as a student Alexander had felt uneasy, almost ashamed, when he had realised that all of a sudden he had forgotten about his family, and Simbirsk—when it had happened, albeit for a brief moment, it had been as if he had broken off the thread that needed to be knotted together again as quickly as possible. Later, as was bound to have been the case, Simbirsk became part of his past and life as such was going on in St. Petersburg. Although he used to dream about student life before he left home and think a

great deal about the university, he had not been able to picture to himself what it was really like. In the same way as he had read about railways, before ever having travelled on one and had been unable to imagine that when he did eventually set off in the iron monster to St. Petersburg, for the whole forty-eight hours he would be unable to sleep a wink because of the rattle in the stuffy third-class carriage. Alexander was to conclude: "People talked about the pleasures of travelling on the railways, but in my opinion it's almost equivalent to punishment. "Yet man can get used to almost anything and the following year he was to write to his parents after reaching St. Petersburg that he had "had a better journey than last autumn and had even managed to sleep a little on both nights."

Fifteen years earlier, when travelling down the Volga to take up his new post, Ilya Nikolayevich had been thinking about what lay ahead. Alexander was preoccupied with similar thoughts on this occasion as he followed the same route from Nizhni Novgorod to Simbirsk. Unlike his father, however, who had once been full of optimistic hopes and expectations, the future appeared to Alexander as troubled and far from clear, a future that was constantly demanding that difficult decisions be taken. How could Alexander talk about all this to his family, to his father? If he said nothing, they would be hurt, if he started to tell them what was on his mind they would be upset. Not once, on no single occasion, had he ever lied to his family. When unwilling to discuss in detail

what he was thinking about or knew, he might remain silent or refrain from answering his friends', teachers' or even parents' questions, but he never acted against his conscience. During the investigation and when being questioned by the judge in charge of the trial he would only answer the truth. Yet all that still lay ahead.... And again in that same St. Petersburg.

When thinking back to that city Alexander would always see in front of him those fortress walls, the stone vaults within them that housed prison cells, and the barred windows. On one of their first Sundays in St. Petersburg Alexander and Anna—she had followed her brother to the capital as she was a student of the Bestuzhev higher education courses for women—had visited together the Peter and Paul Fortress.... Thinking back to that time Anna Ulyanova-Yelizarova had commented: "Such visits, which the authorities viewed as patriotic pilgrimages to the tombs of the Russian emperors, were still permitted at that time."

Swept along by a cold Petersburg wind, the slanting rain seemed set on obliterating the reflection of the Peter and Paul Fortress, on wiping it from the dark mirror of the Neva River's waters, complete with its bastions, dome and the spire of the cathedral. Each time the wind rippled the water's surface, it made the fortress walls quiver and shudder, and the reflection of the golden spire went in and out like a concertina: then when the surface became smooth once more the fortress would appear still and un-

shakeable in the Neva River. Dread when confronted by that building was a sensation handed down from one generation to another: fear would come over the beholder at the mere thought of being a prisoner within the Peter and Paul Fortress, an inmate of one of its dungeons.... Alexander, walking a few paces ahead of his sister walked in under the drawbridge through the fortress gates. Three and a half years later they would shut out the world, light and life for him forever....

The brother and sister walked over to the cathedral across the cobbled courtyard of the prison, in which the stillness was only broken by occasional shouts of the sentries. They began to wander from one white-marble tombstone to another set up to mark the resting-place of the various autocrats laid to rest there.... These sanctified persons at their lives' end had proved no different from all other mortals: some had died of illness and old age, helpless and frail, others had been strangled, stabbed or blown to pieces. How close at hand and tangible it all seemed here in the Peter and Paul Fortress: the graves of the tsars and the shadows of those who had been incarcerated by them in the dungeons. Radishchev, the Decembrists...[260]

As she looked round at the sentry who accompanied them back to the gates Anna said to her brother: "Sasha, Pisarev spent four years here as well. Do you believe me when I tell you that after that almost rural freedom of our Simbirsk I feel now as if I was shut in in one of those bastions, held

down by a terrible power, completely and hopelessly trapped." Her brother said nothing, merely giving a nod to show that he had heard what she said.

Twilight was beginning by then. The wind was blowing off the river and sweeping across the Field of Mars. Then the brother and sister walked past the railings of the Summer Gardens. Anna tried to start up a conversation again, but failed: Alexander only gave monosyllabic answers to her questions: he was totally engrossed in his thoughts.... Karakozov had also been imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress, he had been kept in one of the dungeons right up until the time of his execution. It was said that he had been tortured and that the warders had not given him the chance to sleep.... It had been somewhere nearby, outside the railings of the Summer Gardens that he had shot at Alexander II.

Many, many years later, when recalling that autumn evening when darkness had fallen so early, Anna Ilyinichna had written: "I can remember experiencing few moods so painfully oppressive and intense. That was probably because those were the first impressions of that kind to impinge themselves on my young heart, a heart that had not yet encountered suffering.

"That may well have been the reason why I can still picture to myself so clearly the expression on Sasha's face, that expression of gloomy concentration, that I had never seen on his face before, so clearly that I could put it straight down on paper now, if

I could draw: those tight-pressed lips, knitted brows and the expression of suffering in those thoughtful eyes which almost defied description. It was as if his face had aged just in the course of that short walk."[261]

...On down the Volga chugged the steamer from Nizhni Novgorod towards Simbirsk. The lowering mist seemed to push down the steam coming out of the funnels, preventing it from soaring aloft and it spread out behind the steamer like a swirling melting train, just as our past floats after each one of us. Alexander Ulyanov was still standing there on the deck with his shoulders hunched from the cold. The sun which had since early morning been trying to penetrate the grey film of mist was now completely hidden from view by a cloud that covered the whole horizon. All around him the scenery that but a short time ago had borne witness to a spring in full swing had suddenly grown pale and grey and there was an unmistakable hint of autumn in the air. The damp rising from the river seemed to be invading every available crevice so that not just Alexander's thoughts but also his sensations were keeping alive his memory of the stony cold of the Peter and Paul Fortress.

There was still a long way to go to Simbirsk. Still further down the Volga there was Ilya Nikolayevich's home town of Astrakhan. Not long before permission had at last been granted for Chernyshevsky to settle there—at last after twenty years of Siberian exile! Alexander had heard the rumour that was hard to avoid in St. Petersburg as it went the rounds: the writer's mind was said to be

confused. *His* mind?! Or was it perhaps the minds of those who were now repeating the maxim "forgiveness is nobler than revenge" or "we do not need great exploits, but rather modest toilers to carry out modest tasks for the good of the people". Chernyshevsky, on the other hand, despite covering those enormous distances between the Peter and Paul Fortress and Vilyuisk had remained the man he always was, a man of the 1860s, repudiating the authorities and showing his preference for Reason, and ready as before to continue the struggle. That was why it seemed to the men whose hopes had been crushed and for whom disappointment was a constant companion that he must have gone out of his mind.

On his way to Simbirsk Alexander was thinking about something that now seemed only too clear for him: the intelligentsia of Russia was so weak and so unorganised that it was not in a position to defend itself nor to engage openly in struggle against the government. Yet somebody still needed to take the crucial decisions and carry out desperate deeds, to make the final sacrifice—one's life. That was the result of the conditions, in which the majority were living like bears in their lairs....

Alexander's visit to the Peter and Paul Fortress and Turgenev's funeral were all part of the same drama that was being played out in the capital ... but not because they took place at almost one and the same time. The oppressive symbol of state power with its intolerance towards all that was radiant, intelligent and out of the ordinary was

hanging over everyone. There were times when an intelligent man was viewed by the government as suspect even after his death.

Turgenev's funeral procession had been cordoned off from the crowd along the whole route from the Warsaw Station to the Volkov Cemetery by lines of Cossack troops. They were the first to escort the writer on his last journey, the writer who was well-known to them as a subversive even though they had not read his works. Alexander had also heard how Pushkin's body had been transported secretly from St. Petersburg in a police carriage drawn by black horses. That was how things had been done in the reign of Nicholas I!

In a letter which he had sent to his family in Simbirsk, Alexander had written: "Dear Mamma and Papa! ...Today Turgenev's funeral took place. Anna and I went along too: we saw the procession, the mountain of wreaths and the crowds and the coffin under the gold canopy decorated with wreaths and green branches, but we had failed to get through into the cemetery. The people who had got through said that four speeches were delivered there, but that no one else had been allowed to speak."

Now as he journeyed home Alexander may well have been thinking that the government was not prepared to tolerate any manifestation of feeling or respect for any progressive individual, even at the graveside.... On that very subject Alexander Ulyanov was to write eighteen months later after he had already decided on his future course in life,

when he drew up a proclamation on the subject of breaking up a demonstration held in memory of Dobrolyubov: "We remember Turgenev's funeral at which the government was represented by policemen and sword-bearing Cossacks."

The students, throwing care to the winds, went on to protest: "Turgenev is dead and now if Shchedrin [Saltykov-Shchedrin] were to die we might as well all be buried alive. These men have replaced Parliament, assemblies, life and freedom for us."

Saltykov-Shchedrin was still alive, but for him the closure of *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* (Fatherland Notes) had been a harder blow to bear than any capital punishment. The young people of the day dared not express their gratitude to their favourite writer, nor express their sympathy: the risk was too great. It would have placed them under suspicion straight away and been seen as a sure sign that they belonged to one of the secret societies, which it was then publicly alleged had had their headquarters in the journal's editorial offices.

All that was left for them to do was to go and wish Mikhail Yevgrafovich well on the occasion of his name-day, and to say on that day all that it was possible to say. Two years running Alexander went with a student deputation to Saltykov-Shchedrin's flat in the house on Liteiny Prospekt.

From those two visits he remembered an enormous writing desk piled high with medicines, a bed crammed into the writer's study. The writer was ill, with a dressing gown

wrapped round him and he could hardly stand by then. In his emaciated, pain-lined face the writer's eyes were striking for their unnatural lustre, as if the colour had been burnt out by suffering. It was very difficult for him to recieve the students, but on the other hand he was anxious not to deprive the young people of this meeting.

"We hope that Russian society will express its sympathy and gratitude to you, the great writer and citizen," one of the students announced with such verve, as made it seem that his words had been learnt by heart in advance, before he handed the writer the address that had been prepared by the students on the occasion.

Alexander felt awkward as he listened to this performance: everything that had been happening had caused so much pain to the writer that to remind him of it and to express sympathy in this connection seemed out of place. Soon Saltykov-Shchedrin interrupted the leader of the student group: "There was nothing out of the ordinary about what happened to *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*: the journal was merely shut down for ever.... I must however request you, young people, to avoid showing any kind of sympathy towards me. Otherwise, I risk being banished from the capital as a dangerous trouble-maker. So allow me just to shake your hands."

Alexander felt that more can be conveyed in a single handshake than in a long chain of ordinary words. He waited till it would be his turn to shake the writer's hand.

– "Oh-oh! Not so hard ... that hurts!"

—"Forgive me! Forgive me, Mikhail Yevgrafovich ... I did not mean to, I just..." muttered a horribly embarrassed and blushing Alexander.

—"Never mind, never mind...."

Alexander knew what Saltykov-Shchedrin had said after the journal had had to cease publication. He had been told the actual words: "It was as if they had sealed up my soul." What should the writer live for after that? The government had wrenched the writer's right to his life of the mind. It was as if people were being deliberately incited to resort to desperate measures. Would not there really emerge from among the ranks of the Russian people a handful of men and women so dedicated to their ideals and so deeply aware of the tragedy which had befallen their homeland, that they would not feel it was a sacrifice to die for their cause....

Earlier that day a low storm cloud had hidden the sun from the steamer that was making its way down the Volga. Now the steamer itself had also been swallowed up by that cloud, sucked down into a black abyss.

I cannot breathe! No happiness, no purpose,
And night drags on as if forever.
Say, can the storm be near to bursting?
The cup is almost brimming over![262]

THE END

So the Ulyanovs were able to greet their eldest son at last. The first evening when everyone always talks at once was soon

over: everyone was asking and answering questions and there were more interjections to be heard than coherent remarks, and more kisses than both of those put together. Alexander had soon unpacked the books he had brought with him. The whole year in St. Petersburg he had been carrying out his family's instructions with regard to books, supplying everyone with what they were asking for and making inquiries about them in almost every one of his letters home. He checked with his mother: "Did you receive the German book by Kaiser and was it damaged en route?" He wrote to his brother: "Volodya, I'm sending you the third volume of *Memorabilia*." He wrote home to Simbirsk: "I am sending Papa the pamphlet *Mathematical Sophisms* which he wanted to have. I think that it might be useful for Volodya, if he were to work through those sophisms on his own." What was more, this piece of advice was to prove justified: nineteen years later Vladimir Ilyich began attacking an argument, which to use his words was "as like as two peas to those arguments which mathematicians call mathematical sophistries, and which prove—quite logically, at first glance—that twice two are five, that the part is greater than the whole, and so on". On the same occasion Lenin also pointed out: "There are collections of such mathematical sophistries, and they are of some value to school children."[263]

Alexander had brought home whole piles of books. He laid out the volumes which he needed for his current work. He began study-

ing. He had by then already managed to talk to his mother, Vladimir and Olga about many things, but had not yet had time for that unhurried, heart-to-heart conversation with his father, which they both had been missing so badly. Both father and son were waiting for it impatiently, and yet they kept on procrastinating, for as long as they possibly could....

It took place at last. The only witness to that conversation was the youngest boy in the family, Dmitri. In his memoirs Dmitri Ilyich tried to record as much detail of those minutes as possible:

"It was in Simbirsk in the summer of 1885, six months before our father died. All the rest of the family had gone off somewhere and only Alexander, Father and I were still at home. I was eleven at the time.

"Father and my brother were walking up and down the path in the middle of the garden. They walked for a long time talking about something, quietly and with the utmost concentration. Their faces were particularly serious and they were so absorbed in this conversation that they paid absolutely no attention to my attempts to interrupt and to persuade them to change the subject to something jollier and of more general interest. Sometimes they would be talking in a heated tone but more often in low tones, so that I could hardly hear. I looked into their faces and realised that they were talking about something very important and I should not disturb them. That moment is clearly ingrained in my memory.

"What were they talking about? At the time I had no idea at all, I was just struck by the actual atmosphere of that unusual and inordinately long conversation...."

So what were they talking about, as they thought aloud, each objecting to what the other had to say and trying to convince the other that his view was the correct one? Probably about the things that concerned and worried them most. The youngest daughter in the family, Maria Ilyinichna, asked herself this question and concluded: "Naturally the question arises as to whether our father knew about the revolutionary views of our eldest brother. He is bound to have known: their love for each other went too deep, and they were linked by ties of friendship that were too close for anyone to imagine that Alexander had not been telling his father about his views at least in outline."

If we accept this, then it is possible to imagine that conversation, whose actual content was never recorded. The most fleeting pieces of information enable us to put together a great deal. Anna Ilyinichna was to write for example that in the summer—referred to above—members of the family saw *Das Kapital* by Marx on Alexander's table and the next step from there would be to ask how Ilya Nikolayevich might have reacted to that? After reading and re-reading memoirs by various members of the family, and fitting together the scattered scraps of information into the mosaic of the story, examining the correspondence of the Ulyanov family line by line, and working through the speech Alex-

ander made at his trial till you almost know it by heart, then gradually it is possible to hear those distant voices, faintly at first and then more and more clearly.

So the father and the son were walking up and down the path in the middle of the garden. They were talking about something, quietly and with the utmost concentration. Their faces were unusually serious.

—"Tell me, Sasha, where did those eighty roubles come from which I've seen on my table?"

—"That's your money, Papa. I told you and wrote about it in one of my letters. Anna and I can manage in St. Petersburg on thirty roubles a month. Yet every time you send us money, you send forty. So I used to put ten roubles aside every time.... I hope you don't mind?"

—"On the contrary. I should thank you for that filial present. Forgive me for being sentimental, but the thought that came at once to my mind was that if anything were to happen, your older children would be able to help the younger ones find their feet. If you remember my brother Vasily used to help me.... Just imagine, I was asked recently why my son had chosen to study natural sciences. The implication was that there would be no openings for him afterwards and that all you might do was to become a teacher.... I answered. 'He could also become a professor....' Yes that was what I said."

—"Papa, are you worried about something?" Alexander plucked up the courage to ask at last.

—"How should I put it?" Ilya Nikolayevich said, then paused, trying to hold back a sigh as he took a few more steps down the path. "I noticed what kind of books you have brought home with you this time. They seem interesting to me too—the books on history, for instance. You have many volumes there on political economy. You spare no time for reading *Das Kapital* by the German writer Marx. I think that your capital, Sasha, is in other fields of knowledge."

—"I usually spend up to sixteen hours a day on natural sciences—I have not got the strength for any more than that. Yet knowledge in my specialised field does not do anything to dispel my doubts in others. Yes, I have been given the chance to develop my mental faculties, but robbed—yes, robbed of the chance, like everyone else—to use those faculties in order to do something useful for others."

—"You're wrong about that," objected his father. "Or at least you are being too hasty when it comes to drawing conclusions. Look at my case, for example ... all my work has been aimed at bringing benefit to other people."

—"Yes, you, and other people like you have done a great deal in the name of enlightenment. In Russia nowadays there are more people who can read and who have learnt to think. Yet has the field of their intellectual pursuits been correspondingly extended? No. It decreases significantly. Your schools are being closed down in order to make way for parish schools...."

—"What's already done, my son, cannot be taken away. You can teach someone to read and write but so far no science has been invented that can rob a man of that skill...."

—"Papa, I do not ask why they shut down *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* or why Anya and I were filled with foreboding when we stood near the Peter and Paul Fortress. But you and I and many other people know *Why*. I'm looking for and I need an answer to the question: *What* can save the country from all this?"

—"I can tell you, Sasha, I tell you it's time that will save it."

—"Time?"

—"Only time, nothing else. Time has saved Russia more than once. The age we are living in now will pass, it will come to seem like a dream. If all of us have the courage to wait."

—"Forgive me, Papa, but you were the first person from whom I heard the lines:

Incorrigible is our species,
We do no harm but will not fight

In a voice that was little more than a whisper, Ilya Nikolayevich completed the verse:

Our lives for us are much too precious
We wait for time to put things right.[264]

—"So now you are reproaching me?"

—"Papa, don't let's hurt each other. You first taught me those lines and I'm grateful to you...."

They had reached the end of the path again. Each time they came to its end, one subject seemed to follow on from the previous one

in this lengthy conversation between father and son.

—"Do you know what the men of the eighties are called," asked Alexander, turning to his father. "They are known as the generation cursed by God. And it serves those people right who talk about the age of small deeds. How insignificant they are in comparison with the men of past ages!"

—"Tell me, Sasha, do you think about those who died as heroes?"

—"I know, and I'm convinced that there is only one true path for progress—speech, the press, and persuasion. But I also understand those whom you mentioned just now. When the interests of the whole of society are at stake and the strength of the two sides is so depressingly uneven, then the weaker of the two sides has no alternative but to resort to desperate measures...."

—"Those do not bring emancipation."

—"The road to emancipation is a long one. Those whom you are talking about sought to achieve a minimum of freedoms, to clear away the obstacles on the path to the freedom of speech, the press and conviction."

—"You see, though, that has not happened. Things turned out differently: now we are haunted by suspicion at every turn and it is harder to breathe than ever."

—"That's what always happens before the storm."

—"I don't know, Sasha, whether I really am getting old, after all. But now, as I talk to you, I feel my age, and your youth frightens me.... Yet I still have faith, I have faith

in your reason, in your clear head and honest heart. I just beg one thing of you, take care of yourself. For my sake and Mamma's—take care."

—"It's just that we have not seen each other for such a long time, Papa. These last months I have only had the chance to talk to you in my thoughts. I remember that you used to tell us that apart from our duty to the family there was another duty, our duty to society...."

To conversations like that one, to discussions and arguments of that kind—call them what you will—both parents and children find themselves returning again and again. There is by no means any guarantee that the two generations will always be able to find a common language. Usually it is time that shows which side was right. Children tend to have nagging pangs of conscience after conversations like that: they were no longer able to share their lives with their parents completely, as they had done in the past. The parents meanwhile are left with the bitter taste of loneliness: they see that their children are growing further and further apart from them. It is only years later when their children themselves become parents that children become aware of the anxiety and heartache that had robbed their own parents of their peace of mind. There is nothing to be done about it: the path of each successive generation is never to be repeated, just like time itself....

When recalling the conversation that he had heard his father having with his elder

brother, Dmitri Ilyich maintained: "Now I am quite sure that the conversation I have been describing was on political subjects and there is no doubt either that it was not the only one they had, or that they turned to that subject by chance. It could not have been otherwise in those times when the heroic struggle of the Narodnaya Volya revolutionaries against the autocracy had just come to its tragic end. If we bear in mind that the ties between our father and Alexander were ties of the closest possible friendship—according to all available evidence—and that our father was deeply interested in all that my brother cared about, it is then out of the question that Alexander could have hidden his political convictions from Father. Quite a different question is the issue as to how far his view of terrorism had crystallised by that time.

"My assumptions were borne out by what my father said later to Anna when she left for St. Petersburg: 'Tell Sasha, that he should take care of himself, for our sake at least'."

On that occasion Anna was leaving for St. Petersburg a little later than Alexander and she received a letter from Alexander after he reached the capital, saying that he would try to find her a more comfortable room and that if he failed she could share his room to start with.

The Ulyanovs saw off their elder children and it was not long after that, before the first snowstorms blew up. Ilya Nikolayevich was having a hard time of it that autumn and at the beginning of the winter that was to prove his last.

Narrow as it was prior to that the circle of those with whom he could share his innermost thoughts was growing smaller. Arseny Fyodorovich Belokrysenko was no longer among the living, the manager of the Crown Lands Office in Simbirsk who had also been a member of the Schools Council and a member, together with Ulyanov, of the Committee of the Karamzin Library. He had not just been a colleague of longstanding but also godfather to Ilya Nikolayevich's children—Vladimir and Maria. On Saturdays Belokrysenko had been a regular visitor of the Ulyanovs'. He would spend long hours playing chess with Ilya Nikolayevich. This however did not stop Ilya Nikolayevich from enjoying many a duel with his sons too over that very same chessboard.

Vladimir was to recall: "Initially Father used to beat us, then Alexander and I laid our hands upon a manual for chess-players and started to win the games against Father. On one occasion we encountered Father coming from our bedroom—we slept upstairs—with a candle in one hand and our manual for chess-players in the other. Then he sat down and pored over it."

All that did indeed happen. But sometimes children have the impression that adults when playing games with them derive as much pleasure from it as they do. The time spent with his children was indeed dear to Ilya Nikolayevich, yet he really did feel the lack of a close adult friend with whom he might have talked about many different things as he engaged in a peaceful, unhurried game.

—"It's Saturday again and there's no one to play chess with."

It is possible that Ilya Nikolayevich would have liked to share his thoughts with Belokrysenko about what was depressing him and really offended him—the humiliating delay with the decision as to whether he would be allowed to continue in his present position. Ilya Nikolayevich had celebrated 25 years of his work with the school department as far back as 1880 (on that day he had been presented with a marble desk set by the local teachers). On that very day, in keeping with the rules of those times, he had submitted an official request for permission to continue to serve in his post for another five years. The request had been a routine one: often civil servants would, after that day, be given two, or even three extensions of five years. Moreover Shestakov, the Counsellor of the Kazan Educational District, to whom Ulyanov had submitted his request, was a man who valued Ulyanov for his "excellent and zealous service". Without a moment's delay, Shestakov had begun petitioning for Ulyanov. Reports had already come into the Ministry of Public Elucation recording dissatisfaction felt by the local clergy on account of the independence which the Director of Elementary Schools permitted himself: later these reports were even to get to Pobedonostsev, the Attorney-General of the Holy Synod. Shestakov was informed that permission had only been granted for "the Director of Elementary Schools in Simbirsk Gubernia, Full Councillor of State Ulyanov, to continue

in his post for one year more....”

So soon after that, before the year was out, Ilya Nikolayevich was compelled to start taking steps to try and secure his post for a further period, an activity that was quite unlikely to bring him any joy. Once again Shestakov had to turn to the Minister for Public Education and this time he reminded him: “...Ulyanov has constantly distinguished himself through his zeal in his work and he has always enjoyed the truly well-deserved trust of the whole of our local society....” This time Ilya Nikolayevich was granted a further four years in his post.

These four years were to come to an end as well though, on November 11, 1885. No answer was forthcoming to the new request that Ilya Nikolayevich had submitted with regard to the next five years. The five years' extension was over, November was over and New Year was round the corner. There was still no answer from the Ministry. The uncertainty was hurtful and humiliating: Ilya Nikolayevich did not know whether his post was still his or whether he could now be classed as an impostor at his venerable age.

Yet Ulyanov was well aware that what was happening to him was merely the logical extension of all the unpleasantness that was coming more and more to the fore in his work. Some of Ilya Nikolayevich's enemies were based in the capital and could easily influence the course his affairs were taking. Others, still in Simbirsk, were writing reports to the Chancellery and to various newspapers. The very same Archpriest Baratynsky, who

at one time had given due credit to the elementary schools, was now collecting material designed to compromise these schools, material to demonstrate that in Simbirsk Gubernia the clergy was being forced out of elementary education. He eventually sent his slanderous material to Katkov, editor of the *Moskovskiye Vedomosti.*[265]

At Katkov's press, the work entitled *The Current Condition of Russia and the Question of Classes* by the Simbirsk landowner A. Pazukhin was being printed, by that time he worked for Count Tolstoy in the Chancellery of the Ministry of the Interior. Proceeding from the impressions he had gleaned in Simbirsk Gubernia Pazukhin wrote: "In the twenty years that Zemstvo schools have been in existence there has been little progress in the promotion of literacy but meanwhile parental authority has been seriously undermined.... A good number of those young bawlers who cause trouble in village assemblies and have ousted the influence of the old men are the pupils of our elementary schools."

A man, who was particularly eager to take up arms against Ilya Nikolayevich and his work, was a friend and retainer of Count Tolstoy, his advisor Voyeikov, a rich landowner from Syzran Uyezd. Not long before Ulyanov had been opening a school at a factory belonging to Voyeikov and the latter had actually delivered a message of thanks on that occasion. Now though, when speaking at a meeting of the Syzran Uyezd Assembly this very same Voyeikov reproached the

Director of Elementary Schools, in view of the fact that his work was allegedly not progressing as well as it might appear from the reports sent in. Some of the former pupils from these elementary schools became tillers of the land and immediately forgot everything that they had learnt at their desks, which meant that the money set aside "for the schools was being wasted". Others were breaking away from the class to which they belonged and turning into people whom Voyeikov described as "constituting a threat to public order".

No one in Simbirsk Gubernia was likely to remonstrate to Voyeikov, given that he had such poweful friends in the capital. Ilya Nikolayevich, however, took this step. In his annual report he pointed out that Voyeikov who spent most of his time in St. Petersburg, was not familiar with "the details of the way teaching was organised in all the local schools". Next the Director of Elementary Schools took the bold step of collecting information on the careers of his former charges, after they had left the elementary schools, finding out what kind of work they were doing, whether they used to read books, what their general level of mental development appeared to be and what the "moral tone" of their lives represented. Ulyanov and his staff began drawing up surveys of this kind in the Karsun Uyezd (adjacent to Syzran Uyezd and similar to it in most respects).

Ilya Nikolayevich set off there just before the New Year festivities to usher in 1886. The

trip through that uyezd left him totally exhausted.

After that he had to travel as far as Syzran by train. Feeling more and more drained of his strength Ilya Nikolayevich wrapped his coat around him and curled up his legs so as to lie down on one of the III Class carriage seats.

—"Tuck your feet in," demanded the conductor angrily. "You're blocking the aisle."

Ilya Nikolayevich pulled himself up. Suddenly his winter-coat turned back and the conductor saw his uniform complete with gold buttons. The cowardly conductor hastened to make his apologies and stood to attention in front of His Excellency—the Full Councillor of State.

—"Never mind, never mind.... You walk through now, there's nothing blocking your way any more," said Ilya Nikolayevich, without getting up from the seat he had been lying on.

In Syzran Ilya Nikolayevich met his eldest daughter, Anna, who had come home for the winter holidays. They set off home on the last part of the journey by sleigh. Anna Ilyinichna was later to write: "I remember that I was immediately struck by how Father seemed to have aged and grown weaker since the last time I had seen him, the previous autumn.... I also remember how gloomy he seemed as he told me of the then current trend in government policy—to build parish schools to replace the Zemstvo ones. This meant that what he had been fighting to build up for the whole of his life was now

being thrown out on the rubbish heap. It was only later that I came to realise how hard Father had been taking all this and how all these worries were carrying him off to an early grave."

Tragedy had truly descended by now and the Ulyanov family was soon to be struck by irreparable loss and bitter trials—each one more terrible than those which had gone before. The execution of the eldest son which was to happen very soon afterwards was to determine to a large extent Vladimir's future. Anna Ilyinichna recalled that "Alexander Ilyich died like a hero and his blood, like the glow of the revolutionary fire, lit up the path that the next brother, Vladimir, was to follow". Indeed the life and death, struggle and courage of Alexander Ulyanov were to provide a revolutionary torch for Vladimir. That torch was so bright that sometimes it hides from us another lesson that Vladimir had received earlier still. His father's example forced him to ask himself that vital question—What is to be done?—and try to find an answer to it with all the passionate emotions that filled his young heart, and with all the strength of his uncompromising youthful honesty: What is to be done, if even people like his father—men of honour, intelligence and men with a vocation—fear that at the end of their lives all their work will be reduced to naught, work to which they have devoted themselves selflessly, always setting the highest standards and never making allowance for themselves? What does all that mean? Nothing could be achieved without

first changing and reorganising, without first destroying and then creating something new to replace what has gone before in the life and society of Russia.

Thinking about this influence which the fate of his elder brother had had on Vladimir Ilyich, Krupskaya was later to write: "An important factor in all this was that Vladimir Ilyich had by that time already thought about many issues independently and had formed his own opinions on the essential need for the revolutionary struggle."[266] The lessons Vladimir had received through his father's words and example had also served to bring him nearer to his decision regarding the need for a revolutionary struggle. The collapse of all his hopes came shortly before Ilya Nikolayevich's death.

New Year was always associated in this family with the work connected with the annual report to be drawn up by Ilya Nikolayevich: in the first days of this new year, 1886, Ilya Nikolayevich also worked on such a report. Then on January 10, he fell ill. Yet he did not take to his bed and some school inspectors came to the house and continued to work with Ilya Nikolayevich on the report. Two days later Ilya Nikolayevich was feeling worse. On the night of January 12, he was unable to get a wink of sleep. Anna wanted to stay near her father and he asked her to read aloud to him some of his papers. His daughter dutifully did as she was asked, until she realised that her father was falling asleep. At last he dozed off and Anna then left him on his own.

Ilya Nikolayevich rose at dawn the next morning. He looked through the mail: right up until the very last day of his life he was hoping to receive news that his request to be allowed to hold his position for another five years had been granted; he went on hoping that that news would come, but he was still waiting in vain. He sat down at his desk and worked until two o'clock in the afternoon. He had continued working until he had finished, until he could at last sign his sixteenth "Report on the State of Elementary Schools in Simbirsk Gubernia".

He did not feel like eating and excused himself, saying that he wanted to lie down. Yet when everyone had sat down at table Ilya Nikolayevich appeared in the dining room after all. He did not come into the room, but just stood there leaning against the doorpost. He gazed in silence at his wife and his children who were all gathered together, except for Alexander who was still in St. Petersburg. Perhaps it was really so or it was just hindsight that led his family to recall that there was an anxious look on Ilya Nikolayevich's face at that moment, that he seemed to be looking in on himself. He stood there for a moment, then turned and left the room.

Later Maria Alexandrovna was to comment: "It was just as if he had come to say good-bye."

Two hours later Ilya Nikolayevich was no longer alive. During his last moments Anna and Vladimir were at his bedside together with their mother. He died just as he had lived out his whole life—only taking the

shortest of breaks from his work and without causing anyone any trouble. On January 12, he died when he was in his fifty-fifth year.... Three days later the Minister for Education signed a decree granting permission to the Full Councillor of State "to remain in office for another year up until July I, 1887". Instead of the five years he had asked for only a single year had been granted.

In January the twilight gives way to darkness so easily, almost imperceptibly, that it is difficult to distinguish the dividing line between the day that is passing and the evening that is setting in and after that between evening and the onset of the night. Not knowing what time it was, Vladimir hurried through the dark streets to the edge of the town. He was alone and encountered no one on his way, from one corner to the next in this frozen night world. It was not the solitude that frightened him though, but the fact that his father had gone. A man's first bereavement always makes an adult of him overnight. For the first time words, which before he has only read and heard from others, now acquire real meaning and arouses a response in his heart: words like irreparable loss.... For the first time he is forced to accept with head bowed that life is stronger than he is and that his wishes and prayers cannot influence its course in any way. In a single moment something can happen that he has never even thought about before and that he has never been able to imagine.

Man appears on this earth, steps out into life, sheltered by the cares of his family:

without that it would be impossible for him to remain on this earth, bewildered in his helplessness. Growing up—in the true sense of the word—is something a man only really starts to do when he begins to redirect the attention centred on him towards others. The earlier this happens, the greater the need for this he will feel, the quicker and the more noticeably a person will grow up. Without that he will remain childishly selfish until well advanced in years....

That evening Vladimir went to fetch home his younger brother Dmitri who had been visiting friends and did not yet know about the misfortune that had befallen the family. Vladimir would have to tell him about it all. Vladimir himself had not yet fully taken in to what extent he himself had changed. That day he had started out as one of the children in the Ulyanov family and by the end of it he was the eldest man in the family. He was to remain so all through that bleak winter. Maria Alexandrovna, unwilling to call Alexander away from his studies, did not want to summon him home from St. Petersburg....

Three days later Vladimir was one of those to share the task of carrying his father's coffin as the funeral procession made its way to the church. He was not even sixteen at the time. He still had all his life before him and all that he was to accomplish still belonged to the future, to the years that preceded another similar short January day, when he like his father would die of a brain haemorrhage, albeit one year earlier. Lenin did not live to see his fifty-fourth birthday, dying in a sec-

ond-floor room of his house in Gorki with Nadezhda Konstantinovna at his side. That was on January 21, 1924 at ten minutes to seven in the evening....

Ilya Nikolayevich was buried in the enclosed land of the Monastery of the Intercession. Many sad speeches were delivered and grateful words, interrupted by many a tear, sped him on his last way.

What sad and heavy thoughts might be brought to mind by the unexpected sight of that coffin. Ilya Nikolayevich took with him what cannot decay, what cannot be buried underground or stolen by thieves, namely his firm belief in the final triumph of good over evil and his ardent love for his family. As time was to pass the sadness at his death would be felt all the more keenly and there would be more tears as the sorrow of a bereaved family made its impact: to the initial sighs and sobs there might be added new, more meaningful tears as the children gradually became more and more aware of how they were now deprived of a dear parent. They still had their mother, but how difficult it would be for her to do all that was essential for her children under those new conditions that were hard and might have broken even the toughest of characters! How hard it would be for this mother to help her children bear their helpless sorrow, when her own loss dulled her thoughts and tore at her heart. Difficult, grim days lay ahead for her.

But everyday cares dominate the life of the family, overshadowing holidays and the period of mourning.... A file was to appear in

the office of the Kazan Educational District with a neatly printed title on the cover: "Regarding the death of Director I. N. Ulyanov, and petitions for the granting of a pension to his wife and children". This file was soon to swallow up countless applications from Maria Alexandrovna Ulyanova who was compelled to submit no small number of them.

"I humbly beg your Honour to obtain for me and my four young children ... a pension on account of my deceased husband's thirty years' loyal service....", "I am now without any income and have four minors to support, who are all attending school; my two older children I also have to support while they are completing their higher education. Although my husband deserved a pension, I have not yet received anything and therefore I make so bold as humbly to beg your Excellency to be so kind as to support my petition for a special allowance in aid to provide for me and my children", "The pension which is due to me and my children on account of my deceased husband's years of service will probably take a long time to arrange, yet it is necessary for his family to live in the meantime, to repay the money used to pay for my husband's burial, to educate my children, to support my daughter training to be a teacher in St. Petersburg and my eldest son who on completion of his schooling in the Simbirsk Gymnasium won the gold medal and is now studying at St. Petersburg University in his third year at the natural sciences faculty.... I hope that, God willing, he will be a support to

me and his younger brothers and sisters, but at the present time he, like the other children, still needs my help; he needs money so as to be able to complete his current course of study... so it is to this end that I am turning to you....”

Composing petitions and seeing to business letters were activities that Maria Alexandrovna had known nothing about before. Now that was what she had to attend to, once darkness had fallen and her children were asleep. It was terrible when she had to go into her husband's study for the first time, light his lamp and sit at his desk. All his papers were still lying there, addressed to the Director of Elementary Schools. The counsellor of the educational district had informed him that he was to be awarded the Order of Saint Stanislav, First Class. Yet Ilya Nikolayevich had not had time to receive the honour. Now all that remained was for his family to receive the decoration posthumously. Yet even this Order would have to be paid for. The Order of Saint Stanislav was something they would have to do without....

For a moment Maria Alexandrovna thought that one of the children had woken up upstairs and then she realised it was not the case after all. Once again she bent over the desk and continued writing in the flickering light of the kerosene lamp.... The children had been very small when she had shown them a blank sheet of paper and asked them to guess what had been written on it. They looked at it, turned it over and round, but had no idea what was happening. Then their mother held

the sheet over the fire and the lines written in milk began to show up. "On seashore far a green oak towers...."[267] Maria Alexandrovna had not known then that her children when they were behind bars would write messages in milk between the lines in ink and that her son Vladimir would make ink-wells out of bread, and eat them when the warden came to inspect his cell. Neither she knew what lay in wait for her children and what was in store for her herself in the very near future, something almost too terrible to think about.

Do not cloud over their joy with your tears,
Tortured mother do not weep:
But tell them in their tender years
That there shall be times, whole centuries,
When what men shall long for most of all
Is a crown of thorns, a cup of gall....[268]

Not long before her own death, when Maria Alexandrovna was already over eighty, she said: "If only we could wake up several decades from now and see what the earth would look like, how people would be going about their lives then...."

Maria Alexandrovna also believed in the inevitable triumph of good over evil.

BROTHERS

In spirit, brothers, we are one
Both believing the time will come....

Once more these words could be heard above the fields and copses of Kokushkino. These

lines that had been so dear to Ilya Nikolayevich were now being sung by Anna, Alexander and possibly Vladimir and Olga as well.

In the summer of 1886, when the Ulyanov children gathered for the last time to spend their holidays in the Kokushkino they held so dear, they were still living under the shadow of the irreparable loss with which they had not yet come to terms: everything in the place had associations with Ilya Nikolayevich. They walked through the woods repeating his little rhymes such as: "Pick the berries sweet and mild, Don't lose sight of a little child!" They went off swimming and remembered how Ilya Nikolayevich used to hurry down to the river ahead of all the others.

As always Alexander devoted a good deal of time to his studies. At the end of his third year at the university he was the first at the student contest. He wrote home to Maria Alexandrovna on that occasion from St. Petersburg: "For my zoological paper about ringworms (I had started work on it last summer) I won the gold medal...". Maria Alexandrovna was to shed many a tear over that letter thinking how sad it was that Ilya Nikolayevich was not able to rejoice at his eldest son's success....

Alexander was very busy during those holidays as well; he would sit down at his microscope at dawn or set off to collect materials for his experiments in the flat-bottomed boat which was so unstable that it threatened to capsize any moment. Alexander though knew how to manoeuvre it. If he

wanted to relax he would go out with a gun in search of game. Vladimir he would meet more often than not over the chess-board.

The brothers concentrated hard as they played, each refusing to make any concessions to the other. As each one waited for his opponent to move he was probably turning his thoughts back to their father who had first showed them how to play chess, patiently explaining that the pawns could only move forward and bishops diagonally. Alexander and Vladimir were now able to play without a board, even without chessmen; while out on their walks they used to play "blind", imagining to themselves the disposition of the chess-men and remembering each of their own moves and also those of the opponent....

One evening in Simbirsk as night was falling they were sitting near a window with a wire mesh blind drawn across it. The lamp was burning and out in the garden the younger children were running about in the shadows of the summer evening. Someone came running over to the window and seeing the motionless figures of the chess players on the other side of the wire mesh blind, called out: "They're sitting there like convicts behind bars!"

The brothers shuddered and looked at each other with one and the same thought in their minds: by this time both of them were seriously thinking about what the future might hold.

Yet in most respects they were very different; Alexander was after his mother. His

face was like hers—only now that he was a young man did the curve of his lips and the arch of his eye-brows reminded the family of their father—and more important still his character was like hers: he was unshakeably firm and even-tempered like Maria Alexandrovna and like her he had a very keen sense of justice and was astonishingly sensitive to those around him. The only difference was that this feeling was shielded in Alexander by his being most sparing with words.

Vladimir, on the other hand, had inherited both his father's build and his facial features. He had a similar dynamic character and the same capacity to devote himself heart and soul to any task on which he might embark. He even laughed in the same way as his father. Nadezhda Krupskaya was to write in that connection "How he could burst out laughing sometimes, till he cried! He would throw his head back and break into hearty guffaws, no polite smile or controlled smirk, his laughing was always of the totally natural kind."[269]

Alexander was the kind of person who always thought carefully before he spoke and who preferred to keep silent rather than hurt someone. Vladimir, on the other hand, was impulsive in what he said and quick to leap into the attack. Any kind of teasing was quite alien to his elder brother, whereas his junior Vladimir, particularly while still a schoolboy, enjoyed all kinds of pranks. If we add to this picture the intolerance of the young and the maximalist nature of their judgements, then it is not difficult to imagine

how different they were. This was particularly true during that last summer in Kokushkino, when Alexander was persistently thinking about the road he should choose and Vladimir too was beginning to think about the same.

The blatant alienation between these two brothers was distressful for their elder sister, and she tried to talk about it to Alexander:

"How do you like our Volodya?"

"There's no doubt about the fact that he's very able, but it is not easy for him and me to see eye to eye."

"Why?" insisted Anna.

"That's just the way it is," Alexander shrugged his shoulders.

"I can understand that you don't like Volodya's audacity and his arrogance. But don't forget that he's at the age when all boys turn particularly aggressive in their arguments. You're being too strict to him. Your brother is in opposition to the authorities at the gymnasium, he has turned his back on religion- that much he told me himself. In a word he is going through that first period of rejection and renunciation which is all part of character-building, at that stage when a young person is rejecting the authorities he has been taught as a boy to view as unshakeable...."

Each time we turn our thoughts to the past and dwell on a particular stroke of the picture, or a casually uttered phrase, we are always running a risk: against the background of all that happened, this particular brushstroke and phrase of necessity might appear

intentionally profound and sometimes have an almost fatal ring about them. Anna Ilyinichna kept this fact in mind as well when she was working at her memoirs: "I know that the judgement expressed by the elder brother — the perpetrator of a terrorist act — with regard to the younger brother, a Social Democrat, makes it tempting for many people to jump to the conclusion that the brothers did not agree when it came to political convictions." And then she goes on to demonstrate in detail and most consistently that "what might appear as the most natural explanation would be the most incorrect".

That summer Vladimir celebrated his sixteenth birthday: "In those days young people, particularly in that backwater province so alien to public affairs, were not quick to take up a definite political stance. Hence the conviction of Vladimir's elder sister that "...at the time Volodya had not had any definite political views". As for Alexander, although he had chosen the path of revolution he was not yet ready to engage in political action. He was taking the road towards revolutionary Marxism trying as yet, as was so typical of his times, to reconcile Marxism and Narodism. "This meant," according to his sister, "that he therefore had no reason for failing 'to see eye to eye' with a person attracted to Social Democracy." The final conclusion of hers is probably the most vital. Alexander was unlikely "to bring up this point with his younger brother, still at school, particularly in the year when they

lost their father, when he felt especially sharply the responsibilities he bore to his mother with relation to the younger children."[270]

It should however be remembered that Anna Ilyinichna points out elsewhere that her "elder brother died too early for us to be able to say how the relationship between the two of them might have developed later on".[271] Nevertheless she had drawn the same conclusion as Krupskaya.

Remembering what Vladimir Ilyich had told her, Krupskaya wrote: "They were both hard workers and revolutionary-minded. The difference in their age, though, made itself felt in various ways. There were certain things that Alexander did not tell Vladimir."[272]

That summer it was only time and their ages that held the two brothers apart from each other: the differences between a university student and a schoolboy, between young man who for the most of the year was living independently in St. Petersburg and an adolescent who had not yet closed the door of the family home behind him, between an adult who had already opted for the path of revolution and his brother, whose critical attitudes towards the world around him were still taking shape.

Vladimir was now the eldest man in the household; this made him anxious to appear quite independent to Alexander as well, when he was at home for the holidays.... The brothers could still become carried away by chess games as in the past, while Maria Alexandrovna would still be reminding the young-

er of the two that the task she had given him to carry out was still to be completed. He would probably have behaved differently if Alexander had not been there. On this occasion Volodya laughed off her request in a rather casual tone, with no intention of abandoning the game.

"Volodya, will you please go this minute and do what Mamma asked you to, or I'll abandon this game," said Alexander in a calm but very firm voice, which left Volodya no choice but to get up and do what had been asked of him.

The brothers shared the room. Alexander was deep into Marx's and Vladimir meanwhile was leafing through Turgenev.

"He's spent the whole day leafing through, reading and rereading *A Hunter's Sketches*[273] for the nth time," Alexander commented disapprovingly to his elder sister.

He was not destined to know or to see how two years later when Vladimir, after coming across the works of Marx, was carried away by them once and for all. Those pages of Turgenev's were to prove to have left their mark as well. Vladimir Ilyich would have cause to turn back to them.

...In the summer of 1907 when he was in hiding in Finland in a country cottage near the Styrsudden lighthouse, Lenin was to write: "The slave who drools when smugly describing the delights of slavish existence and who goes into ecstasies over his good and kind master is a grovelling boor."[274] This particular comment was addressed to the liberals—those educated, starry-eyed gen-

tlemen who love so much to talk about democracy and to swear they sympathise with the cause of freedom. When exposing the empty and futile nature of Arkady Pavlovich Penochkin (a character from Turgenev's story "The Steward")—an enlightened, reasonable man who "to use his own words was stern but fair, showed concern for his serfs and meted out punishments to them for their own good".

Lenin wrote: "Here we find depicted a civilised educated landlord, a cultured man with a European polish well versed in the social graces. The landlord is treating his guest with wine and conversing on lofty themes. 'Why hasn't the wine been warmed?'—he asks his lackey. The lackey turns pale and does not answer. The landlord rings, and when the servant enters, he says, without raising his voice, 'about Fyodor... make the necessary arrangements'.... Turgenev's landlord is 'humane' too ... so humane, compared with Saltychikha,[275] for instance, that he does not go to the stables in person to see that it has been arranged for Fyodor to be flogged. He is so humane that he does not see to it that the birch with which Fyodor is to be flogged has been soaked in salt water. He would never think of hitting or scolding a lackey, would this landlord; he only 'arranges things' from a distance, like the educated man he is, in a gentle and humane manner, without noise, without fuss, without making a 'public scene'.[276]

In Styrsudden Lenin used to wander through the woods, take bicycle rides or sit

by the sea, trying to recover from his tiredness that had accumulated during the days and months of the first Russian revolution.[277] He was then thinking about an article as well. He found his small volume of Turgenev's stories and read the one entitled "The Steward" again. When he came back to the sea, he was deep in thought and closely watching the waves as they broke on the beach one after the other. He was watching them roll on to the shore and then as if they were stumbling over that shore, they would fall and slide back again, leaving nothing but wisps of foam on the wet sand. This movement repeated over and over again, going on and on like the course of time.... How long ago it all had been: reading and rereading Turgenev's *A Hunter's Sketches* earning disapproving looks from his elder brother....

What he used to think about as a boy and young man, what he felt, what he had read and experienced—in his mature years all that will be reflected in an apt comparison, in a striking word, in his pieces of political journalism.

...We are on our guard—and this is a very good thing—against any attempt to detract from the significance of the individual, or public figure who left his mark on the revolutionary history of mankind, and are ready to criticise any line in which what the individual figure has accomplished is not given due recognition. Yet are we always so punctilious and so uncompromising when we come across attempts of a different kind, those aimed at "embellishing" history, saying more

than was actually the case?

Anna Ilyinichna was intolerant to things of this sort. Everything that she has written—and the same applied to what Krupskaya and other close friends and relatives of Lenin have written—is aimed against the legends which began to grow up around the Ulyanov family. If Anna Ilyinichna encountered, for example, the assertion: "Vladimir Ilyich and his sister Olga were carried away by the socio-political movement in Simbirsk" and could not help but comment: "It would of course be an exaggeration to say that Vladimir Ilyich and Olga were carried away by the socio-political movement. Vladimir Ilyich was only seventeen, and Olga a mere fifteen and a half, when she completed her schooling. In Simbirsk ... at that time there was no socio-political movement." His sister Anna also recalls how one of Lenin's school friends maintained that he had had in his keeping Lenin's book of mathematical problems. "It is a great pity that this book of problems, from which he and I used to work and on whose back page he had signed his first name and surname, appears to have been confiscated along with other books when my room was searched in 1906." This assertion Anna Ilyinichna dismisses with a smile, saying: "It is highly unlikely that the gendarmes even in Simbirsk confiscated books of mathematical problems. Is it not more likely that the book of problems simply got lost some time during all those long years?"

Then there was the sickly sweet story to the effect that Vladimir Ilyich, then still a

young gymnasium student, had been given Karl Marx's *Capital* by his brother who was later hanged. Anna Ilyinichna was to write on this account: "However great the influence of the elder brother may have been on the younger and however much the younger may have respected the elder, there is no doubt that Vladimir would have become a Marxist even without any melodramatic handing over of the book, which would have been so out of character with the forthright, unpretentious ways of both brothers."[278]

There is perhaps just one point on which it would be as well not to agree with Anna Ilyinichna, where she maintains that when the brothers came together that last summer, Vladimir "did not yet have clear-cut political views". The assertion is perhaps a reflection of a phenomenon duly noticed by Krupskaya: "Anna Ilyinichna and indeed Alexander looked upon Vladimir as a younger brother ... and this made itself felt in Anna Ilyinichna's reminiscences of Lenin." Grown-ups often make mistakes in their conceptions of the youngers: they see first steps being taken, where action is beginning to get under way, and they take emergent convictions for no more than childish ideas.

That very same summer—to which Lenin himself was to refer later on—he was to see how absorbed Alexander was in his experiments and how much time he spent poring away over his microscope. "No, my brother's never going to make a revolutionary," decided Lenin. "No revolutionary could devote so much time to investigating ringworms!" He

was to be proved wrong, of course. Let us turn our thoughts elsewhere, though, for a moment: this sixteen-year-old used to divide up the people around him, even his dearest ones, into two categories, those who would become revolutionaries and those who would not. This meant that the truth formulated by Chernyshevsky to the effect that every decent man ought to be a revolutionary had already acquired the force of a conviction.

...Alexander eventually went back to St. Petersburg to continue his studies at the university. Vladimir remained behind in Simbirsk, where he had to complete his last year at school. The brothers were never to see each other again....

* * *

November 17, 1886, was the twenty-fifth anniversary of Dobrolyubov's death and the students of St. Petersburg were anxious to hold a memorial service for him. The young people were not allowed through into the Volkov cemetery. A demonstration ensued, in which Alexander Ilyich took part as well. All who were close friends of his were of the opinion that that particular event was what, more clearly than anything else, triggered off the action he was to take subsequently.

No, in actual fact that demonstration did not stand out from the others of its kind. It did not give rise to any extraordinary excesses, nor were particularly hard punitive measures adopted. The course that event took

was fairly typical for Russia.

That morning students made their way to the cemetery in horse-drawn trams and on foot. The numbers were growing steadily and soon there were close on a thousand people there. Policemen were also deployed in large numbers opposite the cemetery gates which had been deliberately closed. There were even more policemen taking cover in nearby courtyards, from which they kept on looking out with a fair measure of curiosity, waiting to see what the students would do. They were in fact engaged in negotiating with the governor of St. Petersburg, who was maintaining that it was not in his power to let them through into the cemetery. He suggested that the students break up. Later he was to ask the Minister of the Interior, Count Tolstoy, what should be done, but he had nothing new to add. He, too, maintained that he was not authorised to grant permission. When it came to issuing bans then there always seemed to be more than enough powers but when it came to granting permission for something then special powers were allegedly required....

All this dragged on for a very long time. Finally a delegation of the students was granted permission to go through into the cemetery to lay wreaths while the students who remained behind the cemetery fence began singing "In Eternal Memory" and then turned back. At the corner of Ligovka Street there then appeared the same governor of the town prancing on his horse in the middle of the road: he began calling on the students

to disperse—insisting, warning and cautioning them. All this, as so often happens, had the opposite effect: earlier the students had planned to go down Gorokhovaya Street, but now they decided to proceed down Nevsky Prospekt itself. Before they reached it, however, the Cossacks came into sight: they were swooping down on them as fast as they could, with their swords drawn. No, even at this stage nothing terrible took place: the time for Bloody Sunday[279] had not yet come. They just scared the students and then stretched out in a chain blocking the road. A similar chain of Cossacks stretched out behind the demonstrators. To their left was the parapet of the embankment and to the right the police station. It was there that the noisiest of the students were dragged off. The remainder protested: "Why only them? Why not arrest us all! It's disgracefully unfair!"

On the other side of the canal curious onlookers were gathering. One of them was only too happy to explain what was going on:

"They wanted to hold a memorial service for their professor...."

"Was that all?!"

"What, does that mean that if I want to hold a memorial service for my parents, I'll be dragged off to the police station, too?"

Every now and then bread rolls were thrown across the canal to the by now hungry students. This, too, started eventually to pall. It was raining and darkness was beginning to fall. Gradually the police began to let the students out of the area that had been cor-

doned off, those who wanted could go in small groups, not more than ten at a time. The crowd was gradually shrinking.

The next day the "ring-leaders" were singled out, very much at random as always. Their flats were turned upside down by police searches and about forty people were expelled from the capital and sent home. That was all there was to it in the end. The whole story did not have anything really out-of-the-ordinary about it. This was just another example of the routine practices that had become the norm for the arbitrariness of the Russian state machine. The demonstrators could well have been lashed and those arrested could easily have been beaten up in the police station or the university could have been shut down. There were plenty of things that might have been done, but the authorities refrained from adopting a good number of the measures open to them. But they could on no account grant permission for a demonstration that had undeniably political overtones. Both the students and the police had known that quite well in advance.

During the demonstration Alexander Ulyanov had felt very excited, like most of his comrades. He had been one of the first to insist on turning in the direction of Nevsky Prospekt. When he caught sight of the chain of Cossacks, he kept repeating clenching his fists: "We must move forward, move forward whatever happens...."

Alexander's hands were not wrung. Nor was he taken off to the police station. His

flat was not searched either. The demonstration did not have any adverse effects upon his studies at the university. Yet, immediately after that demonstration, young Ulyanov was to write in a student leaflet: "Everything that is so dear to any educated Russian and which constitutes the true glory and pride of our homeland, does not exist for the Russian government.... We would oppose the brute force on which the government leans also with force, but a force that is organised, a force that is united by the awareness of its spiritual solidarity." The leaflet was duplicated and distributed throughout St. Petersburg and to other university towns—to students and professors, officials, merchants, Zemstvo officials and lawyers—all over Russia.

The person who deliberately chooses for himself the difficult lot of the revolutionary does so not in response to one particular incident, even the most outrageous one. After all, everything extraordinary can sooner or later be reduced to normal. A revolutionary sets out to fight against existing order of things and social and economic structure, against a state system which he hopes to replace with another, which in his opinion, is more just. That particular student demonstration struck Alexander Ulyanov most of all in that it just seemed routine in the Russia of his times. He had already taken many crucial decisions for himself by then. He declared at his trial: "...My conviction that the existing order was abnormal had already taken root within my mind and vague dreams

of liberty, equality and fraternity had assumed in my mind strictly scientific and precisely socialist forms." It was the Dobrolyubov demonstration that was to be for Alexander the event—the threshold after which he began to advance with striking speed in his political maturity, and everything that followed on seemed to happen all at once, as it were.

Forty years later Anna Ilyinichna, who had also taken part in the student demonstration and helped distribute copies of the leaflet composed by her brother, wrote: "In our times it may appear incredibly out of proportion when the breaking-up of a student demonstration leads people to commit suicide or embark upon political terror." According to Anna Ilyinichna it is only possible to understand all that when a person mentally transfers himself back into those distant times "cursed by God", takes himself back over what now comes to a hundred years. "With regard to the disparity between cause and effect," Ilyanova continues, "it is important not to forget the well-known allegory concerning the last drop which makes any cup flow over, even those that are far from shallow. Is it not true that that drop always plays a decisive role in all uprisings, revolutions, prison riots? Let us remember, in particular, what insignificant trifles can give rise to prison riots. Is it not because in prison, where the individual is suppressed over all measure as it is, any deprivation that might seem just a trifling and unimportant pressure is unbearable and is apprehended as

an insult of the highest order, arousing what may appear as protest out of all proportion. That was exactly the atmosphere to be found in the social life in the eighties which was all-Russia prison."[280]

In that all-Russia prison those who were banning, breaking up, closing down, imprisoning, barring access to even the tiniest scraps of freedom did not even want to think about the fact that every action brings in its wake a counter-action. During periods when civil servants are accountable to no one and act as they please, there can be no feedback, to use the expression of today. Count Tolstoy gave orders to the St. Petersburg governor to pacify the students and that was all there was to it. We now know, however, that one of the responses to those orders was the series of events that took place on March 1, 1887.

The police records relating to Alexander Ulyanov were first compiled on December 18, 1886. There were only a handful of days left before March 1st. The Director of the Police Department wrote to the Governor of St. Petersburg: "In view of the information received about the contacts... between university student Alexander Ilyich Ulyanov with persons banished from St. Petersburg for their part in the demonstration on the anniversary of Dobrolyubov's death, the Police Department has the honour humbly to request your Excellency to be sure to give instructions for detailed information to be gathered with regard to the activities and circle of acquaintances of the student Ulyanov

and to notify us of the subsequent events."[281]

Among Ulyanov's acquaintances the one who was coming to play an increasingly important role in his life was Orest Makarovich Govorukhin. He was a tall young man with pale ginger hair, who at first glance seemed rather phlegmatic. Govorukhin, like Ulyanov, was a university student, but he was two years older than Alexander and more experienced. He had already spent several weeks in gaol on account of his ties with the People's Will revolutionaries.

The two young men used to wander about St. Petersburg for whole evenings at a stretch, avoiding the brightly lit streets and opting for the dark streets or stopping to lean on the parapets of the curved bridges. They would walk along the deserted streets past the enormous warehouses that loomed up eerily in the night ... and talk and talk. When they came back to Alexander's flat they would go on talking. They talked a great deal but for the most part it was about one and the same topic. Endless discussions of one and the same subject by men in mature years usually come to nothing: their resolve falters and their energy evaporates in words. For young men, on the other hand, things look very different: such conversations do not ease the heart, but they excite and fan the emotions, they make tempers run high and explode as deeds.

Govorukhin insisted that what was important was to "protest, protest against despotism, to protest at once, without a moment's delay. Any other course is immoral.

Then only one question remains—how should we act, what form of struggle is more productive? I maintain it is terror. Think of something better...."

—"One could refrain from making any objections to your idea: terror from the government forces us to respond with terror," said Alexander, speaking his thoughts aloud. "Yet Plekhanov[282] in his work *Our Differences* did not accept assertions of that sort. He declared, and to my view correctly, that the intelligentsia has grown accustomed to put its own revolutionary will in place of revolutionary development: to substitute the one for the other.... At one time, as you know, Plekhanov was involved in founding the Land and Freedom organisation, and now he has differences with them: he approaches questions differently. Is he right or not? In order to answer that question, first one has to make a close study of Marx's teaching and then analyse the actual situation in Russia and decide whether all that can be applied to Russia."

—"The programme you expound, Alexander, would require years, and it might after all only prove possible to implement it abroad, where you can have access to the necessary literature and the necessary peace and quiet for academic study."

—"No, moving away is not what I plan to do. You can't turn your back on the current situation for the sake of elaborating some programme.... Running the risk of an extreme revolutionary action, but perhaps making a breach in the wall of the autocracy...."

"That's a horse of another colour," commented Govorukhin with approval. "To achieve through terror at least a minimum of political feedoms. If we contemplate the worst possible outcome, that an assassination attempt could spark off still worse repression—that in its turn would give rise to a counteraction all the sooner."

Only Anna—who used to drop in to see her brother in the evenings—would put a stop to the heated debates. Govorukhin would fall silent, but remain motionless. He would sit out however long it took, till she finally went. Anna did not like Govorukhin and had felt the same about him ever since their first encounter. He appeared insincere to her and to know on which side his bread is buttered. On one occasion she had failed to check her tongue and came out with: "Oh, you're a cunning one, Orest!"

"Me—cunning? What on earth do you mean? Ask Alexander."

"No, no, he's not cunning," Alexander assured his sister.

On that occasion, too, as soon as Anna had taken her leave, the discussions that had been temporarily interrupted took off again. As a matter of fact, everything that needed be said, had already been said before. A desire was not just taking shape but already burning in Alexander's heart—a powerful, impatient desire for action that he could no longer hold in check.

When all that is being waited for is chance, then it is bound to present itself. A student from the university, one Pyotr Yakovlevich

Shevyrev, appeared on the scene. One day he was collecting money to help someone out, another he would be rushing round with the idea that a student canteen should be opened; he was always trying to do ten things at once, and in that way trying to justify his constant bustle. There were times when he would turn to Ulyanov or Govorukhin for support.

—"Oh, I'm quite exhausted. Well gentlemen, I'm waiting for you to contribute to the fund for a student eating-house."

—"So you enjoy wasting your energy, Pyotr Yakovlevich, on such trifles," began Govorukhin, with his typical sneer. "With your talent for organisation you should be just the person for arranging something more important."

"What for example?"

"You'd make a good terrorist," replied Govorukhin with another smirk.

"Surely it's not for me? What you're probably thinking to yourself is 'Oh he'll be quite content with his eating-house plans', " Shevyrev kept the ball rolling in a similar bantering tone like that of Govorukhin's, although it was noticeable that this talk was beginning really to interest him. "Yet, I should like to know, gentlemen, is all this talking just for the fun of it, or is there really a plan to be carried out that you're thinking of asking me to participate in?"

"We're deadly serious but we do not have anything definite in mind," Ulyanov turned to Shevyrev after having merely been listening to the conversation up till then.

—"Well, let me ask you then," said Shevyrev, lowering his voice and making it quite clear by all his appearance that the time for joking was over: "Would you want to embark on terrorist activity? There's a group already and they need helpers."

—"What kind of group, d'you mean? Is it large? Who are its members?" asked Govorukhin, who in his turn had come over all serious now.

"The rules it abides by, as you must realise, are strict. I'm not entitled to name any names. You may think that that doesn't sound very friendly but the end justifies the means. Let's just say that there are as many bomb-throwers and signallers as you could possibly wish for. Chemists too. And there's plenty of money."

It is difficult to know whether Shevyrev believed in what he himself was saying, as he told a story without making sure that it hung together consistently: one moment he was saying that they needed helpers, the next that they had as many people as they could possibly wish for. Probably he really did believe in what he was saying, for he was carried away at that particular moment. It turned out that in actual fact there were only three persons in the group: the organiser Shevyrev, the chemist Lukashevich and bomb-thrower Osipanov. And they were also short of money. Yet Alexander Ilyich had already decided to join this group and he was followed by Generalov and Andreyushkin....

It was in the second half of December.

The cold weather had already set in Simbirsk. The blood-shot eye of the sun did not peer down upon the town beyond the frozen Volga until quite late in the day, glowing smoke was rising above the roofs of the houses, the snowdrifts were sparkling and across the river the ruts of the smooth tracks of the crossing gleamed transparent blue. In that frozen world everything was fragile and distinct.

Just as before, music was floating forth from the direction of the Sviyaga River. Skaters were spinning round.... Had Vladimir brought out his skates that year? It was unlikely, for he was studying very hard in his last year at the gymnasium, from which he was hoping to graduate, like his brother before him, with a gold medal. By this stage no minor unpleasantnesses upset Vladimir's progress at school (there had been the time, for instance, when he had made fun of the French teacher and lost a conduct mark in his term report). If there were any complications he experienced, they were now of a different sort. He was called upon to write, for example, an essay on the subject: "Reasons for the well-being of the people". When Kerensky, the literature teacher, who also happened to be the director of the gymnasium, gave the exercise-books back to the pupils, Ulyanov's exercise-book was the last to be opened. He spoke in a confiding, ingratiating tone, the kind which a teacher usually adopts for a successful pupil whom he hopes to inspire to still greater things but at the same time warn of something: "I have read this piece

and have not corrected anything in it. It is excellent, as always. But what oppressed classes are you writing about here? They have no relevance here—oppressed classes!"

Once again—yet again—let's do justice to time and its swift passing. There is nothing more striking, mysterious, unexpected, that does never stop before any, even the most amazing coincidences! Who could have imagined in that town of Simbirsk lost in the snows, in that immovably frozen Russian world, that thirty years later this particular graduate of the Simbirsk Gymnasium, Vladimir Ulyanov, would address an appeal to the oppressed classes?

"The cause for which the people have fought, namely the immediate offer of a democratic peace, the abolition of landed proprietorship, workers' control over production, and the establishment of Soviet power—this cause has been secured.

"Long live the revolution of workers, soldiers and peasants!"[283] And on that very same day, October 25th, 1917, at the very same hour—ten o'clock in the morning—Kerensky, the son of the director of the Simbirsk Gymnasium and head of the Provisional Government, would leave revolutionary Petrograd, using for that purpose a car from the American Embassy.... Who could have imagined such development on the eve of the New Year festivities that were to usher in 1887?

That winter there was a great deal Vladimir wanted to talk about, he wanted to express his own ideas and to hear someone else's. It

was so important to him by this time that he decided to launch into a frank conversation with one of his fellow pupils: he had had the impression that this particular boy was a likely candidate for a confidant and that he would understand.... Vladimir Ilyich was not to forget this misguidedness on his part, even years later when he told Nadezhda Konstantinovna how the two boys had agreed to go to the Sviyaga Park together. They set off but no real conversation developed. His schoolmate began to discuss how a person should best set himself up for the future and choose a profession which would be bound to ensure him a good career.

"I thought to myself, here we have a careerist, he's not going to make a revolutionary."

It is worth mentioning once again in what definite terms and how harshly Vladimir judged people around him, particularly for someone of his age from a provincial town like Simbirsk. What later came to be referred to as Lenin's irreconcilability was now starting to make itself felt in small matters. People would remember Vladimir Ilyich as someone whom it was easy to infuriate by using the vague phrase "good man" to describe someone. He would grow angry and then ask again. "What d'you mean 'good'? It would be better to say what political principles his behaviour is based upon...."

Everyone can probably remember the time, when, as his personality is developing, he feels in need of an adult to talk to and to meet together with—only that he would listen

without smiling, and would not recall the occasion with scorn. For Vladimir Ilyanov that time had clearly come in his last year at the gymnasium. The elder person he might well have spoken to would have been none other than Alexander. Yet he was in St. Petersburg. In Simbirsk everyone waited impatiently for letters from Alexander, letters which were becoming surprisingly rare, particularly lately. One day Maria Alexandrovna even commented on this to her son.

"Dearest Mamma!

You reproach me for writing rarely and my last letter was indeed delayed. I had forgotten all about it, it had been lying in my pocket for several days...."

It was signed A. U. and dated January 25, 1887. That was the last letter which Alexander was to write home to Simbirsk. After rereading it time and time again Anna Ilyinichna commented later: "That letter was written in a very general turn of phrase, and it would seem to have been a hard one to write. There were even a couple of blots despite the short content. It was apparent that it was proving difficult for Alexander to write to our mother, hiding the main thing that preoccupied him at the time."

The main thing that was agreed upon by Alexander Ulyanov and his comrades was that they would assassinate Alexander III, yet when it came to making preparations for this terrorist act, things did not go well: it proved impossible to link everything together in a single tight knot. They did not have enough materials for making explosives

and they had nowhere to make them. They were unable to gain reliable information about the movements of the emperor. One of the young men, who began to help the group, after learning what their real aims were, announced that he was going to leave it. Shevyrev began to frighten him with reprisals. Ulyanov, however, justly remembering *nechayevshchina*, the tactics of Nechaev's[284] followers, insisted that this vacillating man be assisted to escape abroad. On one occasion Alexander was to say to Shevyrev: "Would it not be better to postpone the terrorist act for the time being, say, till the autumn, when conditions will be more favourable?"

"Postpone?" exclaimed Shevyrev with a start of horror. "Are you, Alexander, sure that you're not going to be arrested tomorrow? Or am I? And all the others? Who can guarantee that we'll still be here by the autumn? And if a weak individual finds himself in the hands of the government? Then may it well not mean the end for everyone? And for what? For the mere fact that we had been planning something? No, this is not the time to give way to doubts. The time has come to act, act with dynamite!"

Shevyrev's perpetual state of agitation used to annoy Govorukhin no end. Was it a case of two antipodes? Perhaps there was one thing they had in common, which more than anything else made it difficult for them to work side by side within one and the same group, to participate in one and the same plot. There are people who, after deciding upon a desperate step and joining a secret

society to that end, cannot help wanting not so much to be the master of their own destiny, as that of other people. If the opportunity to do this is lacking then the plan loses its attraction and the whole enterprise becomes meaningless for them. It was Shevyrev who took upon himself all the organisational side of the project. It is difficult to say whether Govorukhin would have coped with something of this kind. Yet finding himself pushed into the background he began to question every step that Shevyrev took and every word he uttered. Shevyrev, in his turn, aware of Govorukhin's hostility towards him became even more excited and frantic in his activities.

Alexander Ulyanov was a man of a very different mould. For him achieving the objective already decided upon was all-important and it was of no importance which place he was allocated in the proceedings. At the trial he declared: "I was not the main propagator and organiser of the act." That was indeed the case. Yet all the threads of the enterprise came together in his hands, and the responsibility for the practical implementation of the plan lay on his shoulders. Unexpected circumstances gave rise to this situation.

Govorukhin noticed that the police had started focussing their attention on him. He also found out that conversations he had had the previous summer with men from the Cossack village that he came from had become known to the authorities in Novocherkassk, where a dossier was being

compiled on his "criminal propaganda among Cossacks".

It was the middle of February when he said to Ulyanov: "Everything looks as if I should expect to be arrested in the near future."

"Then you'll need to go into hiding, Orest."

"I know that I could go into hiding in either St. Petersburg or somewhere in the vicinity of the capital, but in whose house and how?"

Alexander did not see that as a suitable idea and remarked: "The most rational thing for you to do would be to go abroad."

"Have you thought about the money that would be needed to do that? A considerable sum."

"I have no money of my own, but I could pawn my gold medal that I was awarded at the university. If that is not enough, I shall borrow some."

Alexander then pawned his medal and borrowed additional money. He was concerned to make sure that Govorukhin should have a proper outfit for the journey, so as to look like a well-intentioned merchant. Together they worked out what Govorukhin should say to his landlady and how to put the police off Govorukhin's scent. When Alexander finally took leave of Govorukhin at the Warsaw Station he said: "It won't be easy for you abroad. You're not cut out for that kind of life. Moreover, you have no money, no profession, and know no language."

Govorukhin, touched by Ulyanov's sincere concern on his behalf and feeling somewhat

ashamed at the fact that he was leaving, began to persuade his friend to follow suit: "You are under observation too, Alexander. You ought to get out as well. If you were abroad you would be able to start working on that programme of yours that you're thinking about all the time."

"No, I'm going to be helping prepare for the act. Then I shall go into hiding. If the government starts tracking me down, I shall make my way abroad as well.... Good-bye until we meet again."

Alexander walked down the platform as the train began to pull out waving to his friend for a long time.... At the trial when he was asked why he had agreed to Govorukhin's departure, he replied: "It was his own personal wish to leave."

It was then, perhaps immediately on his return from the Warsaw Station, that Alexander learnt that Shevyrev had gone to Yalta (he was arrested there in March). Pyotr Yakovlevich had suffered from lung trouble previously as well and now it had come to the point where the doctors were threatening him with the onset of consumption and insisted that he should depart immediately for the south.

They were to meet en route for their separate destinations—Govorukhin and Shevyrev—encountering each other purely by chance in some station buffet or other.

—"What, you're leaving too!" exclaimed Govorukhin in surprise. "Where are you off to? Why? Are you coming back soon?"

"I'm making for Yalta as quickly as I can."

"Did you discuss it with Alexander Ulyanov?"

"No."

"His face struck me," Govorukhin was later to write in his memoirs. "It no longer oozed self-confidence as before. Now it bore the mark of overwhelming grief and moral depression. I had never seen him look like that before. He hastened to ward off any further questions from me, shook my hand and boarded his train again."

...However hard one might try to mark time during the days before the fatal act and linger over them, nevertheless the fatal day draws nearer, the date that cannot be avoided- March 1, 1887. There is no escaping it! Yet there is still the urge to warn, stop it coming, to rescue.

Everything is so uncertain, so unreliable, so insecure- if only he could hold back from the final step—then everything would have been different. He might then have followed a different path. That very same year Govorukhin was to find himself visiting Plekhanov: after listening to him he came to accept his arguments against terrorism. Alexander might well have found himself in Govorukhin's place.... If Alexander had held back from that last step then his hopes might have been fulfilled, his dreams of serving the cause of science might have come true. Those who worked with him in the biology study group at the university or who were members of the same university literary-scientific society were to become famous scientists such as, for example, the brothers Oldenburg, Lapo-

Danilevsky, Vernadsky. Fame as writers was to fall to the lot of his acquaintances Merezhkovsky, Veresayev, Serafimovich. If only he could hold back from the final step. After all Alexander himself had at one time suggested that the act be postponed until other times. There was nothing to stop him from going abroad in the meantime.

The voice of Alexander Ulyanov sounds in my ears over and over again. At the trial he was asked why he had not gone abroad and the reply was as follows.

"Among the Russian people a dozen or so can always be found who are so devoted to their ideals and so keenly aware of the misfortunes of their motherland that for them dying for the cause does not constitute a sacrifice. Such people cannot be frightened by anything.... It will fall to someone's lot to stand on the edge of the past, on the very edge and thus to link the past with the first step of the future. It is necessary in that obscure time preceding dawn to keep the torch of revolution burning, to make sure it does not go out before it has passed on into other hands. Once again someone is called upon to face death. Not a death of sacrifice, not a meaningless death, but one which will help men to renounce terror, if that had not been achieved by all the deaths of revolutionaries that had gone before. You, the man of the future, if you look back to what I had done a hundred years ago, it is precisely because I had taken that final step, not turned back, not gone into hiding, not disappeared abroad. You

should not dissuade me from my chosen path. I am your dependable bulwark."

His brother Vladimir, looking back over the path traversed by the Russian revolutionaries before him, wrote: "Russia achieved Marxism—the only correct revolutionary theory—through the agony she experienced in the course of half a century of unparalleled torment and sacrifice, of unparalleled revolutionary heroism, incredible energy, devoted searching, study, practical trial, disappointment, verification, and comparison with European experience."[285]

The absolute purity of intentions, the striking readiness for self-sacrifice making even a man's own death seem a blessing, and finally an unshakeable faith in the inevitable triumph of the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity were all and forever to unite the various generations of Russian revolutionaries, however different might have been the forms their action took, the methods of struggle they might have chosen and the goals they might have set themselves.

On the first anniversary of the October Revolution—Lenin insisted quite firmly that it be precisely during those first celebrations on November 7, 1918—a memorial plaque was unveiled in memory of those revolutionaries of the past; it bears the words "In honour of those who fell in the struggle for peace and the brotherhood of nations". As he unveiled the memorial plaque, Vladimir Ilyich spoke the following words on that day:

"The greatest honour of which the revolutionary leaders of mankind dreamed was

won by them: over the bodies of those comrades who gallantly fell in battle passed thousands and millions of new and just as fearless fighters, fighters who won victory by their mass heroism."[286]

Alexander Ulyanov had a clear idea of what awaited him, well in advance. He therefore saw to it that as few people as possible were drawn into the doomed circle. At the first session in the court he succeeded in whispering to his comrades: "If you need it, put all the blame on me."

Only a man who had completely overcome concern for himself, had raised himself up above fear for his own safety, would be able to think of the fate of others during all those last days. In the student association he belonged to Alexander Ulyanov had introduced another member to take his place, had renounced the secretaryship of the literary-scientific society to which he belonged and he had stopped attending meetings of the economic study group. He recommended to the other student who shared his lodgings to seek accommodation elsewhere: "My participation in a serious project might well compromise you."

When he encountered one of his friends in the university reading-room he did not shake hands with him, but walked past, pretending he did not know him.... During those same days, avoiding any delusions as to what might happen, and understanding that reprisals were inevitable, Alexander decided which members of the terrorist group should be prepared for making a speech in the court, using the

opportunity as a tribune....

At the end of January he and Anna went out to visit friends. During this jolly student party Alexander asked those present to sing: "Tortured by heavy bondage".

"But that's a funeral lament," someone objected.

"Indeed, a funeral lament," concurred young Ulyanov.

Anna Ilyinichna was to recall: "I remember the sad almost tortured look on his face as he said that, which made my heart grow cold." She suspected and sensed that something was happening to her brother. But Alexander would not reply to any of her questionings. He could not tell her the truth and he was not capable of lying. Anna was hurt by this and on one occasion, bursting into tears, she reproached him saying: "You don't love me and you don't respect me!" She then heard his sad reply: "You know very well that I both love and respect you."

Anna Ilyinichna writes about her brother, combining in her reminiscences, two feelings, as it were, two emotions, seemingly incompatible ones. She could not help but admire his courage and marvel at the boldness of his actions and be proud of her hero-brother. Yet there was also the unrelenting pain of a heart that could not heal, knowing that she had been unable, had not known how to and had not resolved to stop her brother, had not used all the opportunities open to her to hold him back.... Yet so often in life it proves impossible to separate and reconcile conflicting feelings. Without them life would cease to

be what it is—an integral whole that cannot be divided into parts, that is given to us but once- to the hero, to the ordinary man in the street, to the victor and the mere mortal.

Alexander and Anna happened to visit one day, for a brief moment, a young professor by the name of Dyakonov, famous for his liberal views, on account of which he was later dismissed from the university. Alexander asked Dyakonov if he could use his address and send a letter to it. The professor burst forth in a flood of words, trying to explain and give reasons for his refusal. Ulyanov listened to what he had to say, rose and left.

After Alexander had been executed, Dyakonov expressed his condolences to his sister Anna and said in an effort to alleviate her suffering: "What was there we could have done! Who could have brought their influence to bear on him? I knew your brother but fleetingly, but I could see at once that his was a character of iron. All I can say now by way of consolation is that your brother did not perish in vain...."

Dyakonov spoke of the fact that in recent time some hopeful highlevel conversations had been going on. Anna Ilyinichna listened to him and then said bitterly: "Even if that is so, does that have to be paid for by such sacrifices, by the deaths of people like Alexander?"

Dyakonov did not like her tone and went on in a much colder vein to say: "Of course, I understand ... your feelings towards a relative...."

In Anna Ilyinichna's memory there stood

her brother before her, just as he had been when Dyakonov had explained at such length why he could not agree to his request. It was as if Alexander was saying: "Look, people like him, they approve of extreme measures, yet when it comes to action, they are not ready to take even the tiniest risk."

Perhaps it were thoughts of a similar nature that filled Vladimir Ilyich's mind when, during his own Siberian exile in Shushenskoye, he wrote: "The Social-Democrats often heard, in the liberal and radical *salons* of bourgeois 'society', regrets that the revolutionaries had abandoned terror; people who were mortally afraid for their own skins and at a decisive moment failed to give support to the heroes who struck blows at the autocracy, these people hypocritically accused the Social-Democrats of political indifferentism and yearned for the rebirth of a party that would pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them."[287]

Some people are sacrificing themselves, while the others stand by to applaud. Some people are acting, while the others are talking about action. Some people are accomplishing a feat, while the others are drawing conclusions about historical necessity on the basis of that example.

Documents and Eyewitnesses Testify

DRAMA

G. V. Plekhanov:

The courage of people like Ulyanov and his comrades reminds us of the courage of the

Stoics of ancient times: you must understand, that, given their view of things, the circumstances in which they found themselves and the high level of their moral development, these people were unable to act in any other way.[288]

ST. PETERSBURG

Government Announcement:

On March lst about 11 o'clock in the morning, three students from St. Petersburg University were arrested on Nevsky Prospekt and shells were found on them when they were searched. The arrested men declared that they belonged to an illegal secret society and it came to light later after the confiscated shells had been examined by an expert that they had been charged with dynamite and lead bullets stuffed with strychnine.

E. I. Yakovlev—student from St. Petersburg University and member of revolutionary circles, an acquaintance of A. I. Ulyanov:

Despite widespread surveillance network this terrorist conspiracy was exposed by the police, only by chance, owing to the fact that they had been keeping an eye on Andreyushkin, one of whose letters that appeared suspicious had been seized not long before. When they made the arrest the police did not know that they had lighted upon a terrorist conspiracy, on the spot so to speak, a few hours or perhaps only a few minutes before it was due to be carried out. The

conspirators had been walking up and down Nevsky Prospekt for several days, carrying bombs as they went and waiting for the Tsar.

The Minister of the Interior to Alexander III, March 5, 1887:

Further investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident involving shells and those men arrested on March lst has revealed that ... the criminal enterprise was led by students Shevyrev, Govorukhin and Ulyanov, of whom only the last two had recently attracted the suspicions of the police.

Alexander III's notes on the report from the Minister of the Interior:

On this occasion God came to our rescue but for how long? Thanks to all the agents and men from all ranks of the police force for not being lulled into a false sense of security and for carrying out their work successfully.

V. A. Posse—member of the revolutionary movement:

Panic has broken out in the university. People were saying that the Tsar had given orders for St. Petersburg University to be closed down forever, as a hotbed of revolution. In order to save the university, Andreyevsky, the Rector and Professor of the police law, a most flexible man, decided to stage a patriotic demonstration, so as to illustrate the loyalty to their Tsar which is felt by the vast majority of students.

An Address delivered by St. Petersburg University to Alexander III, March 6, 1887:

Three criminals, who but recently have become its students to the great sorrow of St. Petersburg University have brought unbearable disgrace to the university through their participation in this devilish plot and in the criminal society. For us the situation is heavy to bear, regrettable and hopeless! In these sad days the whole of St. Petersburg University, all its professors and students, seek their only consolation, Sire, in asking your gracious permission to throw themselves down at Your Majesty's feet in loyal devotion and deep affection.

Alexander III replies to the Address from St. Petersburg University:

I express my thanks to St. Petersburg University and hope that in deeds and not merely on paper it will demonstrate its loyalty and will try to atone for the grim impression made on everyone by the participation of the students in the criminal plot.

The Director of the Police Department to the Minister of the Interior, March 12, 1887:

I have the honour to submit to your Excellency a copy of the duplicated leaflet issued in response to the speech delivered by the Rector of St. Petersburg University, Professor Andreyevsky, on March 6th. Copies of this proclamation are being sent by post from St. Petersburg to various other towns in the Empire.

The Proclamation issued by the Union of Associated St. Petersburg Students:

Yesterday, March 6th, St. Petersburg University was defamed.... It crawled like a toady behind its Rector to the feet of the despot and laid at his feet its finest traditions, which not only embellished it, but were its strength....

We, for our part, hasten to make it clear to all our comrades and to the whole of Russian society, that we were not in favour of the Address being presented to the Tsar, that we did not and shall not renounce our traditions, rendered sacred by thousands of sacrifices, that we have always striven and shall continue to strive after truth in social relations, as we understand it, and that we shall always be aspiring to learn how to find, understand and love that truth, that we have never censured and never intend to censure and spit upon the fighters who have fallen, our comrades in the common cause, our beloved brothers, but admire their moral stature and will learn from them how we should love and fight.

From testimony given by Alexander Ulyanov, student of St. Petersburg University on March 20-21, 1887:

...I was one of the first to come forward with the idea of setting up a terrorist group and I played a most active part in its organisation, by obtaining money, recruiting members, finding premises, etc.

As regards my moral and intellectual commitment to this work, it was complete,

i.e. to it were devoted all that I possessed by way of abilities, knowledge and convictions.

The Programme of the terrorist faction of the People's Will party compiled by Alexander Ulyanov from memory in the Peter and Paul Fortress:

With regard to our fundamental convictions we are socialists. We are convinced that the material welfare of the individual and his full, all-round development are only possible under a social system, where the public organisation of labour enables the worker to benefit from all that he produces and where the economic independence of the individual ensures his freedom in all respects. Only then will the state be able to carry out its proper function, to provide man with as many means as possible for development, and only in such a society, free from competition and rivalry of interests, will the scope for the individual's moral development be infinite....

Alexander III, in response to the Programme of the terrorist faction of the People's Will party:

These are the scribblings not merely of a lunatic, but a total idiot.

SIMBIRSK

V. V. Kashkadamova — a close friend of the Ulyanov family and teacher in an elementary school:

One morning I received a letter from St. Petersburg from a relative of Maria Alexandrovna Ulyanova — a certain Peskovskaya....

Peskovskaya wrote that the Ulyanovs' eldest son Alexander was seriously involved in the attempt to assassinate Alexander III and that he was now under arrest. She asked me to inform Maria Alexandrovna of this, after doing my best to prepare her for the shock. At the end of the letter she noted that Anna had also been arrested.

Fearing to alarm Maria Alexandrovna by any hasty words, I decided to seek advice first of all from Volodya, who at this time was the eldest man in the family.

I sent my maid to the gymnasium so that she should immediately call Vladimir Ilyanov, student of the 8th class, to come and see me. Soon afterwards Volodya appeared. Knowing his strong character I decided to give him the letter to read and asked him to prepare his mother. After he had read the letter Volodya thought for a moment and then said slowly: "Yes ... it's serious". Then he fell silent and left.

Two hours later a pale, but calm Maria Alexandrovna came to visit me, walking with firm gait. She came up to me and just said: "Can I see the letter?" I handed her Peskovskaya's letter, without saying anything, and she read it through carefully. Not a single muscle in her face quivered.

She said: "I shall be leaving for St. Petersburg today. Come to see the children, please." Not another word. She walked out as calmly as she had come in.

ST. PETERSBURG

I. D. Lukashevich — student of St. Petersburg University, participant in the affair of March 1, 1887:

We were tried by the Special Committee of Senate with representation of the estates. After we had been lined up in a long file in the corridor, with a gendarme positioned between each pair of defendants, we were led into the court. The President of the court, Dreier immediately made clear his readiness to find fault with us, by shouting out: "No shaking of hands!" when he saw that I was greeting Ulyanov and the others were doing the same.... When I saw Ulyanov in court at the first session (he was sitting next to me on the the first bench), with a shake of the hand he said to me: "If you need it, put all the blame on me" and I read in his eyes irrevocable resolve to die....

M. V. Novorussky—M. A. from the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, participant in the affair of March 1, 1887:

This desire to take upon himself the guilt of others was so blatant in all Ulyanov's testimony, both before the trial and at the trial, that even the prosecutor began to regard it with mistrust and in his indictment, when outlining what each of the defendants had done, he made a point of stressing: "Ulyanov ascribes to himself a great deal that he did not in actual fact do."

Alexander Ulyanov in his speech at the trial on April 18, 1887:

...I have got convinced that the only correct path to bring influence to bear on the life of society is through propaganda by pen and word. Yet while theoretical considerations always led me to this conclusion, life itself showed me with unmistakable clarity that in existing conditions it was impossible to follow such a path.

Given the attitude of the government to intellectual life, as found in our country today, not only is socialist propaganda impossible, but general cultural propaganda as well, even the elaboration of scientific questions is being made extremely difficult. The government is so powerful, and the intelligentsia so weak and only to be found in fairly large numbers in a few centres, that the government is able to rob it of its only outlet, the last vestiges of free speech.

Anna Ulyanova:

My mother told me that she went to one session of the court. Close relatives had this right. It was precisely at that session that Alexander Ilyich delivered his speech for the defence. Mother told me later: "I was surprised at how well Sasha spoke: he was so convincing, so eloquent. I did not think he was capable of speaking like that. Yet it was so desperately difficult for me to listen to him, that I could not bring myself to sit there till the end of the speech and had to leave the chamber."

The Verdict of the Special Committee of the Ruling Senate, April 15-19, 1887:

...The Special Committee of the Ruling Senate has decided:
1) the defendants Shevyrev (aged 23), Ulyanov (aged 21), Osipanov (aged 26), Andreyushkin (aged 21) and Generalov (aged 20)... should be dispossessed of all rights to property and be subjected ... to capital punishment by hanging....

SIMBIRSK

V. V. Kashkadamova:

After Maria Alexandrovna's departure I often went round to the Ulyanovs' house.

Volodya was for the most part stern and silent, sitting up in his room and, only when he went to see his younger sisters and brother, did he joke and amuse them as before, making toys for them, playing Lotto with them and giving them various puzzles and charades to solve.

When he was called upon to talk about his brother, he would say: "It means he must have had to act in that way, and could not have acted otherwise."

N. K. Krupskaya:

Vladimir Ilyich told me once how "society" reacted to the arrest of his elder brother. All friends turned their backs on the Ulyanov family, even the old teacher who used to visit them all the time to play chess in the evenings, stopped coming.

ST. PETERSBURG

Maria Alexandrovna Ulyanova in a letter to Alexander III, March 28, 1887:

Most Merciful Monarch,

The grief and despair of a mother lend me the boldness to turn to your Majesty, as my only defence and help....

I do not have enough tears to weep through all my grief. There are no words to describe all the horror of my situation....

A little over a year ago my husband died, former Director of Elementary Schools in Simbirsk Gubernia. I have been left to bring up six children, four of whom are still minors. This totally unexpected misfortune, which has come crashing down on my grey head, might finally strike me down, if it were not for the moral support that I derived from my eldest son, who promised to help me in every possible way and who understood the critical position the family was in without support from him.

He was so engrossed in science that he turned his back on all kinds of entertainment, so as to be able to spend his time in the laboratories. He was held in the highest esteem at the university.... Meanwhile he is accused of so severe a crime and, without doubt, the prosecuting authorities have weighty evidence for their indictment.

I know neither the essence of the charges, nor the evidence on which they are based. Yet after comparing the actual fact of the accusation of the gravest treason with the facts relating to my son's convictions in the

most recent past and to his dedication to science and the interests of his family, I am aware of an irreconcilable incongruity, which seems to me somehow totally inexplicable.

Mercy, your Majesty, mercy I beg you! In an hour of need so desperate as mine, help can only be sought from the Almighty and the Merciful Tsar.

Alexander III in response to the letter from Maria Alexandrovna Ulyanova:

How well she knows her son to be sure! What had she been thinking about till now?!

I think it would be desirable to let her visit her son so that she might convince herself of what kind of an individual he is — her dear little son — and she should be shown her son's testimony so that she might see what kind of convictions he has.

The Minister of the Interior to the Director of the Police Department:

Could the Tsar's permission for Ulyanova to visit her son not be used so that she might persuade him to give frank testimony, particularly with regard to the names of those who, apart from the students, were involved in arranging this whole affair? It seems to me that this might prove successful if we were to bring skilful influence to bear on the mother.

Anna Ulyanova:

Mother has told me ... about her visits to Sasha, too. At the first meeting he wept and knelt at her feet embracing her knees

and asking forgiveness for the grief he had caused her. He said that apart from his duty to his family he also had a duty to his homeland. He described to her the oppressed position of his people deprived of all rights and he pointed out that it was the duty of every honest man to fight for the people's liberation....

He tried very hard during that and following meetings to reconcile his mother to the fate that awaited him.

"You must reconcile yourself to it, Mother!" he would say.

He spoke of the younger children, of the brother and sister that followed him, who would graduate from school with gold medals and would be a comfort to her.

He talked to her of Schlüsselburg — the only possible alternative to capital punishment for him — of the horrors of life imprisonment, for there he would only be allowed religious books to read and how he would be bound to go out of his mind there. Surely his mother would not wish that for him?...

The last visit that mother was able to make to my brother was in the Peter and Paul Fortress. She told me about the grim setting of that visit, behind two rows of bars and with a gendarme marching up and down between them. But she also said that on that occasion she came to see my brother filled with hope.... For there were rumours circulating that there would be no execution. She was unable to convey this news to him because of the strict conditions under which that visit had taken place, but wish-

ing to convey to my brother some of her hope and cheerfulness when he was faced by such an ordeal she just repeated to him twice as she left: "Take courage! Take courage!"

Since her hopes were not realised, those words proved to be her parting words, the words with which she sent Alexander on his way to the scaffold....

Maria Alexandrovna Ulyanova in a conversation with Zinaida Krzhizhanovskaya-Nevzorova:

I knew that I would not see him again. I do not know how I managed to get home and lie down. I felt that I could not face life any more, that I did not have the strength for it. My head was empty of thoughts. I had only one desire, to die as quickly as possible, so as not to feel anything. I do not remember how long I was lying down, but it was probably a long time. Suddenly I saw before me the little face of eight-year-old Masha. I had forgotten about her, I had forgotten about them all.... Then I pulled myself together. I knew I must not die, I had to live.

The Minister of the Interior to Alexander III, May 8, 1887:

...The condemned men, in view of the fact that they were being transferred to Schlüsselburg prison, assumed that they had been granted a pardon....

M. V. Novorussky:

Three days were spent preparing the scaffold, which was set up outside the prison

yard and then brought in to be reassembled. Here in the yard, by the entrance to this old wing it was put up without any sawing or hammering being required....

Government Announcement on the March 1, 1887 affair:

The sentence of death through hanging pronounced by the Special Committee of the Ruling Senate was executed on May 8, 1887, in respect of the condemned Generalov, Andreyushkin, Osipanov, Shevyrev and Ulyanov.

SIMBIRSK

V. V. Kashkadamova:

Maria Alexandrovna arrived in Simbirsk when the whole town already knew that Alexander Ulyanov had been executed.

Announcements of this were pasted on all town poles.

After she had returned to Simbirsk, Maria Alexandrovna did not speak about Alexander at all at first. I did not feel able to bring up the subject before she did. We were silent on the matter for a long time. When we met we used to speak about all manner of trifles, but the big question to which we made no reference, was always there between us, and not for a moment did we forget about it.

Once when I was in the Ulyanovs' house, Maria Alexandrovna handed me an envelope without saying a word and then left me.

On opening the envelope I saw two photographs of Alexander Ilyich taken in his

prison robe just before his execution. That was all that she had been able to persuade the gendarmes to let her have.

M. V. Novorussky:

It was not until 1906, after I had been set free from Schlüsselburg, that I found out where Alexander Ulyanov had been buried.... On money provided by the Petrograd Executive Committee I erected on that spot in 1919 a granite monument bearing the names of all those who laid down their lives there between 1884 and 1905....

Anna Ulyanova:

I remember how Vladimir, to whom I showed the photograph of the monument to the victims, made martyrs by tsarist autocracy in Schlüsselburg, when he visited my flat for the last time, said: "Copies should be made of this photograph, it ought to hang in every workers' club, for people do not know as much as they should about the history of our revolutionary struggle, about the number of lives it cost."

* * *

After the execution of her son Maria Alexandrovna remained in St. Petersburg for a few more days. Anna meanwhile remained in the prison for detainees before trial.

She still had to carry out Alexander's last wishes. He already knew about everything that was to come: about how soon it would be before he died and what a terrible death

awaited him. He asked his mother to see to only two practical matters. He wanted her to redeem his gold medal from the pawnbrokers, which he had pawned to raise money for Govorukhin and then to sell it, so as to be able to pay back the money he had borrowed for Govorukhin, and to give back the books which he borrowed from time to time from the owner of a voluminous library, V. Vodovozov.... Everything else Alexander Ilyich had been able to see to for himself in time: the only things he left behind him unfinished were his dreams and his hopes for the future....

Maria Alexandrovna returned the money that had been borrowed, and the loaned books to Vodovozov. There was to be unpleasantness, however, in connection with one book—a collection of articles in German, which included an article by Marx about religion, for it was not anywhere to be found. Vodovozov indeed, as soon as he heard about Ulyanov's arrest, began to sigh: "Oh, what a pity, he borrowed such a valuable book from me and now it looks as if it has been lost...." Efforts were made to find the book in second-hand bookshops and to order it from abroad—but all in vain.

A few years later in Samara, fate was to bring the Ulyanovs and Vodovozov together once more. In fact he even began to visit them in their home—not for long however. The vanished book still seemed to be preying on his mind and on one occasion Vodovozov made a quite unambiguous remark, although he chose his words carefully: he said he had warned Alexander Ilyich that the book was

very valuable and that its loss reflected a careless attitude on the part of revolutionaries to other people's property. Through his reproachful tone it was as if Vodovozov was implying that he, while not risking or sacrificing his life for the common cause, nevertheless did return books he had borrowed without fail.... Vladimir Ilyich learnt about that conversation from his elder sister and it insensed him. His response was: "Let him say out loud and clear what he wants for it: let him tell us how much the book costs and we shall repay him...."

There are people to whom books mean more than life itself—not their own life of course.

...After a good deal of efforts on the part of Maria Alexandrovna her eldest daughter's five years exile in Siberia was commuted to living in Kokushkino under police surveillance. On May 11, she was released from prison. And a week later Maria Alexandrovna left St. Petersburg together with her daughter. Exactly a year earlier on the very same day—May 19th—Anna and Alexander had left the capital for their summer holidays in Simbirsk. That was something impossible not to recall now and neither woman had the strength to hold back her tears.

Seeing how depressed his sister was on that day Alexander had bought her some pansies (in Russian "Anyutiny glazki"—"Little Annie's eyes"). Anna was upset and reproaching herself for the fact that she had not plucked up the courage to go and take two exams. She kept asking herself and trying

to give herself honest answers to the question: What had stopped her—was it because she had felt ill, overtired, or was it because she had not been working hard enough? That had all seemed so important to her, and the exams that had been deferred till the autumn loomed up like some enormous disaster, unlike anything that had ever gone before.... If only we had the opportunity to compare the set-backs of each fleeting day with the disasters that are destined to befall us in the future, then probably every unpleasant experience would worry us less, though life in general would be perhaps more problematic....

Indeed the number of coincidences that cropped up in the life of the Ulyanov family was far from small—those kinds of coincidence which make even the most bitter sorrow seem even more bitter. A prosecutor by the name of Neklyudov had brought the case against Alexander and his comrades at the trial in connection with the affair of March 1, 1887. From Penza by birth, over twenty years previously he had attended courses at the Institute for the Sons of the Nobility, where his favourite teacher had been Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov. No, Neklyudov had not forgotten that fact, just as he remembered his own youthful flirtation with free-thinking. Rumour had it that after the trial he even took to his bed with a nervous breakdown. Yet that had not stopped the prosecutor insisting that the death sentence remain in force at a general meeting of the Senate, at which the appeals of the condemned men were considered ... Alexander Ilyich was executed on May 8th

and on exactly the same day four years later Olga Ulyanova was to die of typhus....

Maria Alexandrovna returned to Simbirsk. She did not ring or knock at the front door, but went in quietly through the back door, her grey head bowed low. The children were waiting for her.

Maria Alexandrovna had been away from home for over two months; she had come back only for a short time and then would return once more to St. Petersburg. All that time Vladimir had been seeing to the younger children. He had also been taking his school-leaving exams. He had grown up more quickly than the other children: he was seldom heard to laugh or make jokes. His childish vitality was a thing of the past. He had become the head of the family.

He had written in a petition: "Anxious to put my maturity to the test, I have the honour to request most humbly from your Excellency to be allowed to undergo it." The whole of that period had been a test of his maturity as far as he was concerned. He submitted the petition on April 18th, three days after the beginning of his elder brother's trial in St. Petersburg. Vladimir took the exams, answered all the questions and maintained a stubborn silence when he heard insinuations in the gymnasium of the kind: "So that's what kind of a brother you have. We awarded him a medal and now look what he has done." It was only among the family's most intimate friends that Vladimir would state with the firmest possible conviction: "Alexander had to act like this...."

The day before his brother's execution Vladimir went to take a Latin exam. He had to answer on Cicero's philosophy: "Death, as Cicero wrote, is something we ought to think about from an early age, so that we might be able to despise death, for only that kind of reflection can bring us a tranquil heart. After all, death lies in wait for all of us, perhaps even on this very day. How can someone who fears death maintain his strength of mind in the face of death which threatens us each passing hour?..."

On May 8th, when Alexander Ulyanov went on his last journey—the road to the scaffold—Vladimir was doing a written exam in mathematics which involved solving two problems—one on algebra and one on arithmetic.... All this time, all those months he had been in the public eye: the brother of the political criminal who had raised his hand against the tsar, the brother of man, who was arrested, tried, and hanged. Life experience is paid for at a high price: illusions, trustfulness, naive conceptions of the people around you, of their loftiness and of the loyalty of friends.... Ilya Nikolayevich's closest assistant, the schools inspector Ishersky, now became Director of Elementary Schools. Only a short while before he had been one of the small circle of those welcome in the house on Moskovskaya Street. He had a pleasant voice and used to sing, accompanied by Maria Alexandrovna. Every time he deemed it necessary to remark: "With that wonderful accompaniment it is especially easy to sing...."

Now something incredible happened– or rather incredible in the eyes of young people, but not those of more experienced adults– albeit something depressingly ordinary: Isher-sky made as if he did not know the Ulyanovs at all, being unwilling to greet them on the street, even Maria Alexandrovna.... It is possible to despise the opinions of the narrow-minded, or ignore them completely, but it is impossible not to feel their burden, heavy as a tombstone.

You attempt to imagine Vladimir Ilyich's emotional state at the time, piecing together words and phrases. There is very scarce evidence to turn to.

Maria Ilyinichna was to recall as she looked back to her childhood impressions: "I can still see before me his troubled, sad face.... I was too small to understand all the horror of what had happened and what struck me most, strange as it may seem, was the sight of my brother Vladimir; it was through his grief and sad words about Alexander that I began to take in the whole significance of what had happened."

The family insisted that the elder brother's fate spurred on Vladimir in his aspirations to become involved in revolutionary work. Yet if someone would bear in mind the norms of day-to-day life and not abandon so-called common sense, then it cannot be denied that not only Alexander's execution but even his arrest should have provided a warning and deterred all other members of the family from taking up with free-thinking.

Reflecting on the influence that his broth-

er's death had on Lenin, Krupskaya wrote:

"An important fact in all this was that Vladimir Ilyich had by that time already began thinking independently on many subjects and already reached a decision for himself on the vital need for revolutionary struggle.

"If that had not been the case then the fate of his brother would probably only have caused him profound suffering or, at best, given him the urge and resolve to follow in his brothers' footsteps."

Gorky was to point out that Lenin knew how to conceal the secret storms within his heart. If you open the fifty-five volume edition of Lenin's works, you will not find a single word about his elder brother, not in a single article, paper or speech. While attacking the tsarist regime he never made direct reference to Alexander, while reflecting on the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary struggle, or even when he was talking about the courage of revolutionaries, he never once referred to the example of his brother. That wound was too deep for him to refer to those events in order to illustrate a point. The toll of the revolution's heroes was too large and sweeping to be consolidated by reference to the tragic death of one person, albeit Lenin's own brother, or by reference to the tragedy of one family, albeit his own.

This is probably what makes the reminiscences of three witnesses all the more interesting, reminiscences of three people who knew the student Alexander Ulyanov well and whom Vladimir Ilyich was to meet after his brother's death.

The first of these was Ivan Nikolayevich Chebotarev. He had finished the Simbirsk Gymnasium and been a close friend of Alexander's in St. Petersburg, where he had shared lodgings with him. Chebotarev came to Simbirsk just a month after the tragedy. "I met the assembled Ulyanov family in that hour of their bereavement," he recalled. Chebotarev was asked questions most of all by Vladimir Ilyich, who wanted him to tell them as much as he could about Alexander's last days, and how he had conducted himself during the trial. "He asked me all these questions calmly, almost too methodically, but clearly it was more than just to satisfy his curiosity. He was particularly interested in his brother's revolutionary sentiment."

So it happened that Chebotarev was the first person with whom Vladimir Ilyich talked openly about his brother. This youth on the threshold of life was interested in Alexander's political ideas and in the practical aspects of his revolutionary struggle. Vladimir Ulyanov was anxious to comprehend the revolutionary path his brother had followed, so as to choose his own.

"For all of us, his involvement in the terrorist act came as a complete surprise," remarked Vladimir Ilyich in one of the conversations with Chebotarev. "Perhaps my sister knew something, but I knew nothing at all."

Two other memorable meetings were to take place three or four years later when Vladimir Ilyich, while resident in Samara, paid visits to St. Petersburg in order to take his final examinations as an external student.

In St. Petersburg Vladimir was to meet the assistant professor Sergei Fyodorovich Oldenburg (who later was to be a leading orientalist, academician, and permanent secretary of the Academy of Sciences for a quarter of a century). He had worked with Alexander in the student literary-scientific society.

Oldenburg recalled: "I cannot specify the exact date of the meeting. It was after the death of his brother, but what I do remember clearly is the young, gloomy face on which I did not see a single smile, just a tense expression...." On the same subject he had written, a few lines earlier: "I remember him gloomy and taciturn, he was finding it very hard to get over the death of his brother."

What struck Oldenburg, however, and gave him food for thought was the nature of the questions that Vladimir had asked about his brother: "His questions were concerned mainly with his academic work, and that was what made the most powerful impression on me during that meeting." Oldenburg was amazed at the total absence of "even a mention of the political aspect of the case". This conversation was to prove quite different from the one Vladimir had had earlier with Chebotarev and covered a quite different topic. "Obviously it was very important to Vladimir Ilyich and something that meant a great deal to him, the fact that his brother was engaged in scientific work." Why should this have been so?

It is possible to assume that Vladimir Ulyanov, after having decided once and for all for himself, that the terrorist struggle was

tragically untenable, wanted to know how Alexander's life might have turned out, if he had just devoted himself to his scientific work, rather than becoming involved in politics. Right up until the very last day he was busy in his laboratory and was conducting experiments. He was asked at the trial: "Well now, were you looking for possible recruits throughout the four years or did you pursue your studies in the early years?"

"Throughout the four years I was studying those sciences which I had come to the university to study," was Alexander's commendable answer.

Yet as we know Alexander Ulyanov was studying not only natural sciences. Oldenburg, being well-versed in oriental studies, ethnography and history could hardly have been an expert in the work required of a zoologist. The conversation concerning Alexander Ulyanov was more likely than not to have centred round those studies which he attended as a member of the literary-scientific society, where the members endeavoured to analyse every phenomenon of life through the prism of social sciences.

Vladimir Ulyanov did indeed focus his questions about his brother precisely on this scientific work of his. Alexander had become for him the first and closest model of the mutually enriching combination of the scientist and revolutionary. It would be relevant to add here that this conversation took place at the very beginning of the nineties, when young Russian Marxists, just starting out on their revolutionary path, were

being accused of being too bookish, of preferring their scientific research to the revolutionary struggle. To some extent this makes itself felt in Oldenburg's own notes. He admits that what Vladimir Ulyanov was interested in was something quite new for him. "Most of my comrades from among the active revolutionaries viewed their scientific work with a certain contempt or at best with impatience as something most out of time for those engaged in the struggle."

It is nowadays that we say that revolution becomes a science in the works of Lenin, and that science is subordinated to the revolution. At that time, however, the two things seemed incompatible, hence Oldenburg's surprise as he commented: "I could sense behind all Vladimir Ilyich's questions a lively, spontaneous interest, and if I had not known that he was engaged in an active struggle I would have thought that he had decided to dedicate himself to science." It would never have occurred to Sergei Fyodorovich that the young man talking to him, no more than a few years previously, had looked most critically upon Alexander Ilyich's experiments and had thought to himself: "No, my brother's not going to make a revolutionary: a revolutionary would not devote so much of his time to investigating ring-worms."

Finally let us turn to the third meeting. It was with Mikhail Lvovich Mandelstam. He had been a typical figure of the times: he sympathised with the People's Will revolutionaries, showed an interest in the group led by Plekhanov, known as Emancipation of

Labour and yet was to end up a member of the Constitutional Democratic Party (Cadets). He had known Alexander Ulyanov from their days at St. Petersburg University. They had, what was more, both been members of the student delegation that had visited Saltykov-Shchedrin.

Vladimir Ulyanov also remembered Mandelstam. When he returned after his exile to Kokushkino he listened to a lecture by Mandelstam on the group Emancipation of Labour at a political study group in Kazan.

Two years had passed since then. Vladimir had by now become a well-read, convinced Marxist. He went to see Mandelstam simply because he wanted to express his disagreement with Mandelstam's latest brochure. An earlier mistake of the Russian revolutionary movement was being repeated in this brochure—an excessively dominant place was being accorded to the intelligentsia. Mandelstam knew that he was being visited by Alexander Ulyanov's brother and he was not averse to share his reminiscences with Vladimir. Yet as he himself was to write: "We did not talk about anything that was not strictly to the point. I remember that well, because I was even somewhat surprised, that Vladimir Ilyich was not asking questions about his brother Alexander, with whom I had worked in St. Petersburg, whom I knew well and with whom I had corresponded right up until his arrest." Yes, Vladimir Ulyanov had not wanted to ask questions.

His elder brother's tragic fate had become for Vladimir Ulyanov a plumb-line in his

quest for his own revolutionary path. His choice had been made—made once and for all. Revolutionary terror, the heroic sacrifices of the People's Will revolutionaries—all that was a thing of the past now. What could Mandelstam tell him now that was relevant? In the past he had been a friend of Alexander's, but for Alexander's brother he was a political opponent, if not actual enemy. So talking to Mandelstam about what hurt most of all, that wound that was still open, really seemed to have no purpose.

Let us return to Simbirsk though—for the last time now—to those days when Maria Alexandrovna returned from St. Petersburg. She was there when Vladimir was taking his last exams, before completing his schooling, and also when he was awarded his gold medal. There had been serious hesitation before it was finally granted to the school's best pupil. "To the successful one" read the inscription on the medal Maria Alexandrovna; the word successful somehow seemed most out of place, strikingly so even, given the then current atmosphere in the Ulyanov family and their position.

Many important decisions had to be taken and without delay. First of all plans had to be made for the move out of Simbirsk. While in St. Petersburg Maria Alexandrovna had been given to understand that the university in the capital would be closed to Vladimir and he would need to seek a place at one of the provincial ones and even then it would be imperative that his mother keep the closest possible eye on his activities. This same stand

was confirmed by Kerensky, the director of the Simbirsk Gymnasium. Maria Alexandrovna turned to him to express her gratitude: "Fyodor Mikhailovich, I am grateful to you on account of Volodya. I see reflected in your attitude the esteem in which you used to hold Ilya Nikolayevich, you have honoured his memory."

The director, on the other hand, remained strictly official in his reply: "The decisive factor was the outstanding success of your son. Yet I see it necessary to remind you, Maria Alexandrovna, that the decision to award him the gold medal was not arrived at easily. From now on you are called upon to remain close to your son constantly."

"Volodya will be seeking entry to Kazan University, and we are all going to leave Simbirsk. Although it will be ruinous to sell off all our belongings acquired through hard work, we have no alternative...."

The *Simbirsk Gubernia Gazette* was soon to print an announcement: "In view of imminent departure a house and garden, complete with grand piano and furniture are to be sold, the house belonging to Maria Alexandrovna Ulyanova in Moskovskaya Street."

Possible buyers came to look at the house and assess its value, and, along with them, idle gossips—so as to enjoy the chance to penetrate into a house that had been closed to them previously and to have a peep at the mother of a hanged criminal.

They would start lamenting as they crossed the threshold: "You're leaving then, such a grief befell upon you...."

Maria Alexandrovna would turn on them resolutely and in harsh tones inquire: "Have you come to purchase anything?"

The Ulyanov family sold all its property. Even the maps which Ilya Nikolayevich had used. A local teacher bought them and Olga Ilyinichna was later to write to him, saying: "Mamma asked me to inform you that the twelve roubles which you sent for the maps have been duly received and she would like to thank you." Yet in the end they could not bring themselves to sell the grand piano, a witness of peaceful family evenings, now gone forever, and they took it with them to Kazan.

Everything had been done, collected together, laid out and packed. They turned back to take one last look at the house—then it was no more to be seen; then they looked at Moskovskaya Street, but it too was hidden from view as they turned a corner; soon even Simbirsk itself would be hidden from view. Then came more bridges, the wharf, the gang-plank. Once again the Ulyanov family was travelling along the Volga. Once again the wheels were turning and the paddles slapping against the surface, just as if some playful boys were slapping their hands against the water. Simbirsk was slowly sailing away into the distance, sailing away.... Vladimir Ulyanov was never to see it again; it was going out of his life forever, just as each day of our lives, once it is gone.

Farewell! Farewell, Simbirsk! Farewell childhood and those painful early years of youth! How much the family had experienced and come to understand in that town.

"Have you ever travelled along the Volga?" Lenin sometimes used to ask people when he was abroad as an emigré. "It is so wide! Boundlessly wide... As children I used to go out a long way in a boat with my brother Sasha, we went a really very long way out ... and a song used to be floating over the river, a song that seemed to have come from out of thin air...."

* * *

Have you ever been to Gorki in the autumn? When the tall birch trees have not yet finally shed their crown of leaves, yet the rooks' nests can already be seen through the branches—enormous nests, like the baskets of the truly professional mushroom-collectors. The leaves are falling and soon they will have laid a golden carpet on the surface of a small lake, but suddenly flutter up from the water fanned by the breeze like a frightened flock of birds, circle above the larger lake that had started to freeze after the night frost but was now transparent in the warmth of the morning. The scene is yet a cheerful one, with everything glowing gold and full of colour, only the withered grass has started to lean over towards the ground ready to vanish under the snow and later peep up from beneath it an ashen grey.

Those hills, gulleys and copses are attractive in the way that only a typically Russian landscape can be. The house as well, which has nothing remarkable about it, is a two-storeyed building dating from the early

nineteenth century with pillars gracing its front entrance and wings on both sides to the north and the south. The building and the grounds will never be appreciated just for themselves but will always be linked with Lenin. The shady park has nothing of the formal elegance of an English park about it; it simply contains some woods with its lawns and wild flowers and is famous only for the fact that along its paths there used to peep up the mushrooms that Lenin collected. One path in the grounds is singled out from the others by the fact that Lenin used to walk along it towards the East Gate when he set off hunting. It was here that he used to play *gorodki* (kind of skittles—*Ed.*) dividing up all the players into those of "first or second category". Here when he came across a friend one day he asked: "Have you been reading about how our troops are beating the whites? Haven't you read about it? If you wait there a moment, I'll bring you a newspaper." When he caught sight of someone on a bicycle he asked: "Do let me have a turn! You beat me at *gorodki* but I'm sure I can overtake you on a bicycle!" He used to enjoy looking down from that terrace through a field-glass. It was also at Gorki that, when worried about things he would sometimes walk up and down his room throughout a long sleepless night, stop for a time and then start pacing again. The guard on duty would shrug his shoulders and say: "He's been walking up and down like that for two hours, everyone else has been asleep long since and he's still pacing away...."

In that quiet out-of-the-way place, which in those days was a long way from Moscow, Lenin had the chance without any outside interference to commune with nature, the nature that he loved and which he would always miss when in the city: he felt drawn to it in those rare, free moments of his tragically short life. When living abroad as an emigré he used to say: "How I should like to be on the Volga in summer!" After he had returned from Gorki he wrote to Nadezhda Konstantinovna, who at that time was not in Moscow, "The limes are in bloom." Even in the presence of his old friends he appeared to be a very different person, when away from his work, from the one they had known before. "The sight of Lenin strolling in the park at Gorki was unusual and strange," commented Gorky.

Here he hoped to get the better of his illness, for he always believed that he would find the strength to cope with hurdles. He did not allow himself to have an after-dinner nap, he did not like sitting on soft chairs. Lenin was preparing himself to return to work and he believed that he would succeed in this.... In a letter to Maxim Gorky, Nadezhda Konstantinovna told him that even at the end of his life, Vladimir Ilyich had been looking for the book "in which you wrote about him and made me read out to him your article. I can see Ilyich's face before my eyes, the way he listened, gazing out of the window- summing up his life and thinking of you." For long hours he would keep quiet by himself.

Time seemed to be standing still—there were no meetings, no work, no conversations, as if life was moving backwards, bestowing its riches on the past. That was probably why Lenin was taking an interest in the lives of those who had long since departed from the political stage and who were only brought back to life as shadows of their former selves, in echoes of former clashes and once stormy controversies.

He would ask about Axelrod or Bogdanov. "I might start talking about Kalmykova and I would know that the question in his voice, as he asked 'What?' after that, meant Vladimir wanted to know about Potresov,[289] about his present political position. That is the pattern our rather unusual conversations used to follow," wrote Krupskaya.[290]

...In the life of each man—whether great or humble—sometimes more sometimes less frequently, there are moments when everything that was a source of worry or concern, that attracted and was an absorbing preoccupation seems to recede into the background. A harmonious balance of thoughts and emotions is achieved which otherwise had only been experienced in childhood. Solitude and Nature are more often than not what bring us these moments of radiant peace. Lenin was to know such moments probably during his visits to Gorki. During his last years ... months ... days....

Lenin would come down the terrace and walk along the sloping path to the summerhouse by the lake. Sometimes he used to spend a long time there. Do you remember

the photograph of him sitting on a bench at Gorki? He sat there with one leg over the other and his hands folded on his knees. He was wearing his familiar, well-worn coat with a velvet collar. The slightly crumpled peak of his cap was pulled forward over his forehead. His was the face of a pensive and very tired man.... He was engrossed in his thoughts and, as so often, reminiscing. The steep slope and the trees bending over its edge, the slopes covered with bushes, the sense of space and the boundless vistas in Gorki reminded him very much of Simbirsk, the Stary Venets Park and the slopes to the Volga. Indeed the Ulyanovs used to refer to the spot by the summer-house in Gorki as the "Venets".... The Volga, Simbirsk, the childhood.... All that was a closed book by this time. Yet as you leaf through it, every page seems precious!

When our childhood is over and we ourselves have become adults and reached the age at which our parents, no longer with us, had died, we often think back to our parents' house. We cherish that first tender plant of our childhood, out of which grew up the whole tree of our life.

September 1981-November 1984

NOTES

[1] Quoted from *Istorichesky Arkhiv* (Historical Archives), 1958, No. 4. p. 5

[2] Quoted from: V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 41, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1971, p. 594 (Note 543 to V. I. Lenin's "An Unfinished Autobiography"). p. 6

[3] V. I. Lenin, "An Unfinished Autobiography", *Collected Works*, Vol. 41, p. 430. p. 6

[4] Quoted from: V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 41, p. 594 (Note 543 to V. I. Lenin's "An Unfinished Autobiography"). p. 6

[5] V. I. Lenin, "An Unfinished Autobiography", *Collected Works*, Vol. 41, p. 430. p. 6

[6] Quoted from *Recollections About Lenin*, in five volumes, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1968, p. 502 (in Russian). p. 6

[7] Now named the House of Trade Unions (Moscow), where important national and international congresses and meetings are held. p. 7

[8] Quoted from: Ye. Yakovlev, *A Portrait and Time*, 2nd ed., Moscow, 1982, p. 89 (in Russian). p. 7

[9] *Recollections About Lenin*, in five volumes, Vol. 1, p. 540. p. 7

[10] *The Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets* was held in Moscow on March 14-16, 1918. It ratified the Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk signed

on March 3, 1918, which envisaged Soviet Russia's withdrawal from the First World War (1914-1918) and peaceful respite until November 13, 1918. p. 7

[11] *Martov, L.*—one of the pseudonyms of Yuli Osipovich Tsederbaum (1873-1923) participant in the revolutionary movement in Russia; since 1903, a leader of Menshevism, an opportunist reformist petty-bourgeois trend in Russian Social-Democracy; in 1917 headed its "left" wing; since 1919, a member of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (VTsIK). Emigrated from Soviet Russia in 1920.

Chicherin, Georgi Vasilyevich (1872-1936)—Soviet statesman, member of the Communist Party since 1905. Holding the post of the RSFSR (and later the USSR) People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs from 1918 to 1930, he pursued the Leninist principles of the Soviet foreign policy of peaceful coexistence.

Pokrovsky, Mikhail Nikolayevich (1868-1932)—Soviet historian, statesman. Member of the Communist Party since 1905. Since 1929 Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Took part in the October 1917 Revolution. In 1918, Deputy People's Commissar for Education. Head of the Communist Academy, of the Institute of Red Professors. Author of many works on history. Pokrovsky's methodologically wrong treatment of the historical process has been subjected to criticism in Soviet scientific literature.

p. 7

[12] Quoted from: Ye. Yakovlev, *A Portrait and Time*, *p. 90.* *p.* 8

[13] *The Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets* was held in Moscow on December 22-29, 1920. It approved the GOELRO Plan, the first integrated long-term plan for economic reconstruction and development

of the Soviet Republic. The plan drawn up under the guidance of Lenin provided for a fundamental economic reconstruction on the basis of electrification and was, on the main, completed by 1931. p. 9

[14] Ye. Yakovlev, *I Am with You*, Moscow, 1965, p. 32 (in Russian). p. 9

[15] *The Peter and Paul Fortress* in Leningrad was laid by Peter the Great, the Emperor of Russia, in 1703. Since the second quarter of the eighteenth century, it became a political prison notorious for its especially cruel regimen. p. 9

[16] *Schlüsselburg*—a fortress at the source of the Neva River in Leningrad, was founded in 1323 by the people coming from Novgorod. Since the early eighteenth century, a political prison with an extremely severe regimen. Destroyed during the Second World War. p. 9

[17] *Fotieva, Lydia Alexandrovna* (1881-1975)—Russian revolutionary. In 1918-30, secretary of the Council of People's Commissars; in 1918-24, Lenin's secretary. See: L. Fotieva, *Pages from Lenin's Life*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1960, p. 101 p. 10

[18] *Lepeshinsky, Panteleimon Nikolayevich* (1868-1944)—Russian revolutionary, D. Sc. (Hist.), joined the Communist Party in 1898. Took part in the October 1917 Revolution. In 1921-24, one of the organisers and leaders of the Committee for the Study of the History of the October Revolution and the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). Since 1925, Chairman of the International Red Aid Central Executive. In 1927, he became Director of the History Museum in Moscow. Quoted from *Novy Mir* (The New World), 1968, No. 10, pp. 3-4. p. 11

[19] *Istorichesky Arkhiv*, 1958, No. 4, p. 81. p. 11

[20] V. I. Lenin, "Ninth All-Russia Congress of Sovi-

ets", *Collected Works*, Vol. 33. 1973, p. 175. p. 11

[21] *Shaginyan, Marietta* (1888-1982)—Soviet writer. Quoted from: M. Shaginyan, *Retracing Lenin's Steps*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 149. p. 12

[22] *Ibid.* p. 12

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 133. p. 12

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 148. p. 13

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 149. p. 13

[26] *Istorichesky Arkhiv*, 1958, No. 4, p. 78. p. 14

[27] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "The German Ideology" in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 28. p. 14

[28] *Istorichesky Arkhiv*, 1958, No 4, pp. 75-76. p. 15

[29] A. V. Lunacharsky, *Collected Works*, in eight volumes, Vol. 7, Moscow, 1967, p. 60 (in Russian). p. 15

[30] V. I. Lenin, "Extraordinary Fourth All-Russia Congress of Soviets", *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, 1977, p. 190. p. 15

[31] *Recollections About Lenin*, in five volumes, Vol. 1, p. 604. p. 16

[32] P. Lepeshinsky, *Lenin's Life*, Leningrad, 1925, pp. 4-5 (in Russian). p. 17

[33] *Essen, Maria Moiseyevna* (1872-1956)—Russian revolutionary since 1892. p. 17

[34] *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1956, p. 255 (in Russian). p. 18

[35] The reference is made to Gorky's "V. I. Lenin" written in 1924-31. See: M. Gorky, *Collected Works*, in ten volumes, Vol. 9, Raduga Publishers, Moscow, 1982. p. 18

[36] A free rendering of individual phrases from Gorky's "V. I. Lenin". p. 19

[37] N. K. Krupskaya, *Articles on Education*, in ten volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1960, p. 374 (in Russian). p. 19

[38] *Nizhni Novgorod*—the former name of the city Gorky until 1932. p. 20

[39] *Simbirsk*—the former name of Ulyanovsk until 1924. p. 20

[40] *Zemstvos*—elective self-government bodies in tsarist Russia introduced as a result of the 1864 Reform. p. 21

[41] V. I. Lenin, "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, 1977, p. 48. p. 21

[42] Serfdom in Russia was abolished in 1861. p. 22

[43] *Nicholas I* (1796-1855)—tsar of Russia (1825-55). p. 22

[44] *Tsar Nicholas I of Russia: His Life and Reign*, St. Petersburg, 1903, p. 32 (in Russian). p. 22

[45] *Reminiscences of Ilya Ulyanov by His Contemporaries*, Saratov, 1968, pp. 11-12 (in Russian). p. 23

[46] Quoted from *The Great Reform*, Moscow, 1911, p. 162 (in Russian). p. 24

[47] N. K. Krupskaya, *About Lenin*, Moscow, 1979, pp. 25-26 (in Russian). p. 24

[48] A. Arosev, *Documents Referring to Lenin's Biography*, Moscow, 1925, p. 6 (in Russian). p. 25

[49] Quoted from: M. Ulyanova, *Lenin's Father*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1931, p. 10 (in Russian). p. 25

[50] Quoted from *Istorichesky Vestnik* (Historical Messenger), January 1894, pp. 104-05. p. 26

[51] *Alexander II* (1818-1881)—tsar of Russia (1855-81). p. 27

[52] Quoted from *The Great Reform*, p. 95. p. 28

[53] *Herzen, Alexander Ivanovich* (1812-1870)—Russian revolutionary, philosopher and writer (*Memoirs*, 1852-68). He left Russia in 1847. In 1853, he estab-

lished a Free Russian Press in London and published the newspaper *Kolokol* (The Bell) in which he exposed Russian autocracy, advocated revolutionary ideas and demanded that peasants be emancipated and provided with land. p. 28

[54] The reference here is made to informers of Tsar Peter the First of Russia (1672-1725), called the Great, and Count Ernst Biron (1690-1772) who founded a reactionary regime known in the history of Russia as *bironovshchina*. p. 28

[55] *Arakcheyev, Alexei Andreyevich* (1769-1834)—reactionary Russian statesman whose name is associated with a period of unbridled police despotism under Tsar Alexander I.

Magnitsky, M. L. (1778-1844)—Counsellor of the Kazan Educational District (1819-26), reactionary, persecutor of progressive professors. p. 28

[56] *Decembrists*—revolutionaries from among the Russian nobility who rose in revolt on December 14, 1825 (whence their name derives) against the tsarist autocracy and serfdom. p. 28

[57] The reference is made here to the national liberation uprising in Poland in 1863-64. p. 28

[58] *The Third Department*—a body of political surveillance and investigation in tsarist Russia in 1826-80. p. 28

[59] Quoted from *The Great Reform, p. 191.* p. 28

[60] *Saltykov-Shchedrin, Mikhail Yevgrafovich* (his real name Saltykov) (1826-1889)—Russian satirist (the author of the novel *The Golovlyov Family*, 1875-1880), an editor of *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* (Fatherland Notes), a literary-political magazine which was published in Russia from 1839 to 1884. p. 29

[61] M. Ye. Saltykov-Shchedrin, *Collected Works*, in 20 volumes, Vol. 18(1) (From a letter to the Russian

literary critic Pavel Annenkov, dated March 2, 1865), Moscow, 1975, p. 298 (in Russian). p. 29

[62] *Dobrolyubov, Nikolai Alexandrovich* (1836-1861)—Russian literary critic, essayist, revolutionary democrat. Opposed the monarchy and serfdom, advocated the idea of a peasant revolution, and foretold the emergence of a new hero—an active citizen and fighter. p. 29

[63] M. Ye. Saltykov-Shchedrin, "Gubernia Stories", *Collected Works*, in 20 volumes, Vol. 2, 1965, pp. 476-77 (in Russian). p. 30

[64] Quoted from: A. Ivansky, *Young Lenin*, Moscow, 1964, p. 371 (in Russian). p. 33

[65] Quoted from *Alexander Ulyanov and the March 1, 1887 Case*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1929, p. 59 (in Russian). p. 34

[66] N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1972, p. 273 (in Russian). p. 35

[67] See: V. I. Lenin, "Report at a Meeting of Bolshevik Delegates to the All-Russia Conference of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, April 4(17), 1917", *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, 1971, p. 437. p. 35

[68] *Narodism*—a petty-bourgeois trend in the Russian revolutionary movement in the 1860s and 1870s. It expressed the interests of peasants, opposed serfdom and the capitalist development in Russia, and advocated the overthrow of tsarist autocracy through the peasant revolution.

In the 1880s and 1890s, the Narodniks pursued conciliatory tactics towards tsarism, championed the interests of the kulaks and fiercely attacked Marxism.

Its ideologues were Mikhail Bakunin, Pyotr Lavrov, Pyotr Tkachev and Nikolai Mikhailovsky. p. 35

[69] Theses of the report, "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution", Lenin delivered in Pet-

rograd on April 4, 1917; the plan for developing the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist one. p. 35

[70] See Note 10. p. 35

[71] V. I. Lenin, "Session of the All-Russia C.E.C., April 29, 1918", *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, 1977, p. 301. p. 35

[72] N. Nekrasov, "Freedom" in: *Russian 19th-Century Verse*, Raduga Publishers, Moscow, 1983, pp. 285-86. p. 37

[73] V. I. Lenin, "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, 1977, p. 63. p. 37

[74] Quoted from *Recollections About Lenin*, in five volumes, Vol. 1, p. 19. p. 37

[75] *Pugachev, Yemelyan Ivanovich*—the leader of the Peasant War in Russia in 1733-75. p. 39

[76] P. Kropotkin, *The Revolutionary's Notes*, Moscow, 1929, pp. 93-94 (in Russian).

Kropotkin, Pyotr Alexeyevich (1842-1921)—Russian revolutionary, anarchist theoretician, geographer and geologist. p. 39

[77] *Solovyov, Sergei Mikhailovich* (1820-1879)—Russian historian, the author of *History of Russia Since Ancient Times* in 29 volumes, 1859-79. p. 39

[78] S. Solovyov, *Memoirs*, Prometei Publishers, St. Petersburg, 1915, p. 152 (in Russian). p. 40

[79] *Tyutchev, Fyodor Ivanovich* (1803-1873)—Russian poet. p. 40

[80] From N. Nekrasov's poem *Who Can Be Happy and Free in Russia?"* (1863-77). p. 41

[81] V. I. Lenin, "The Workers' Party and the Peasantry", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, 1977, p.421. p. 41

[82] V. I. Lenin, "The Agrarian Question in Russia Towards the Close of the Nineteenth Century", *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, 1977, p. 79. p. 41

[83] V. I. Lenin, "'The Peasant Reform' and the Proletarian-Peasant Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, 1974, p. 121. p. 42

[84] V. I. Lenin, "The Heritage We Renounce", *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, 1960, p. 506. p. 43

[85] See Note 53. p. 43

[86] A. I. Herzen, "The Year 1860", *Collected Works*, in 30 volumes, Vol. 14, 1958, p. 215 (in Russian). p. 44

[87] "Documents for the Dialogue", "Herzen: Man of Russia", Quoted from: A. I. Herzen, *Collected Works*, in 30 volumes, Vol. 14, pp. 238-44, 538-41. p. 47

[88] *Chernyshevsky, Nikolai Gavrilovich* (1828-1889)—a central figure in the Russian revolutionary democratic movement in the 1860s; scientist, writer, literary critic, the author of the novels *What Is to Be Done?* (1863) and *Prologue* (1867-69). He subjected the capitalist system to profound criticism. He believed that the transition to socialism in Russia lay through the peasant commune. In 1862, he was arrested and imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress; in 1864, he was subjected to the humiliating procedure known as civil execution, and exiled to Siberia. Released in 1883. p. 47

[89] See Note 62. p. 47

[90] Quoted from: N. Eidelman, *Herzen's "Kolokol"*, Moscow, 1963, p. 20 (in Russian). p. 48

[91] From N. Nekrasov's "Elegy" (1874). p. 48

[92] P. Kropotkin, *The Revolutionary's Notes*, p. 113. p. 49

[93] *Ushinsky, Konstantin Dmitriyevich* (1824-1870/71)—Russian democrat, educator, founder of pedagogy as a science in Russia. His main works: *The Child's World* (1861), *The Mother Tongue* (1864), *Man as the Object of Education* (1869). p. 50

[94] K. D. Ushinsky, *Collected Works on Education*, St. Petersburg, 1905, pp. 161-62, (in Russian). p. 50

[95] V. I. Lenin, "A Retrograde Trend in Russian Social-Democracy", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, 1977, p. 270. p. 56

[96] V. I. Lenin, "The Government's Falsification of the Duma and the Tasks of the Social-Democrats", *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, 1972, p. 385. p. 56

[97] *Istorichesky Arkhiv*, No. 4, 1958, p. 77. p. 56

[98] *Korolenko, Vladimir Galaktionovich* (1853-1921)—Russian writer, journalist; since 1893, an editor of a Narodnik monthly magazine *Russkoye Bogatstvo* (Russian Wealth), published in St. Petersburg from 1876 to 1918. p. 56

[99] *Belinsky, Vissarion Grigoryevich* (1811-1848)—Russian literary critic, journalist, revolutionary democrat; leading editor of the magazines *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* from 1839 to 1846 and *Sovremennik* (The Contemporary) until the mid-1848. He had greatly influenced the development of Russian social thinking and Russian literature. p. 57

[100] V. G. Korolenko, "The Story About My Contemporary" (published posthumously, 1922), *Collected Works*, in ten volumes, Vol. 6, Moscow, 1954, p. 190 (in Russian). p. 57

[101] *Sovremennik* (The Contemporary)—published in St. Petersburg in 1847-66. p. 57

[102] Quoted from: N. K. Krupskaya, *About Lenin*, *p. 26.* *p.* 57

[103] V. I. Lenin, "The Heritage We Renounce", *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, 1960, p. 526. p. 57

[104] *Dal, Vladimir Ivanovich* (1801-1872)—Russian writer, ethnographer, creator of *A Defining Dictionary of the Living Russian Language* in four volumes, published in 1863-66. p. 58

[105] M. Ulyanova, *Lenin's Father, op. cit.*, p. 5. p. 58

[106] From N. Nekrasov's verse "Grief of Old Naum" (1876). p. 59

[107] See Note 88. p. 60

[108] N. Chernyshevsky, *What Is to Be Done?*, Raduga Publishers, Moscow, 1983, pp. 88-89. p. 60

[109] *Ibid.*, p. 38. p. 61

[110] *Turgenev, Ivan Sergeyevich* (1818-1883)—Russian writer, author of several social-psychological novels: *Rudin* (1856), *On the Eve* (1860), *Fathers and Sons* (1862), among others. Turgenev spent the last years of his life in France. p. 62

[111] N. Chernyshevsky, *What Is to Be Done?*, p. 231. p. 64

[112] *Ibid.*, p. 372. p. 64

[113] *Ibid.*, p. 381-82, 380. p. 65

[114] *Lenin on Literature and Art*, Moscow, 1960, p. 649 (in Russian). p. 67

[115] N. Chernyshevsky, *What Is to Be Done?*, p. 316. p. 68

[116] *Ibid.*, p. 320. p. 68

[117] *Solovyov, Alexander Konstantinovich* (1864-1879)—revolutionary Narodnik. Made an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Alexander II on April 2, 1879; he was hanged in St. Petersburg. p. 68

[118] *Khalturin, Stepan Nikolayevich* (1856/57-1882)—one of the first worker revolutionaries, founded the Northern Union of Russian Workers. Hanged in Odessa for his participation in assassinating the Military Prosecutor of Odessa. p. 68

[119] *Grinevitsky, Ignaty Ioakhimovich* (1856-1881)—member of the Narodnaya Volya (People's Will) organisation (1879-81). Disseminated the ideas of the organisation amongst St. Petersburg workers. p. 68

[120] *Zhelyabov, Andrei Ivanovich* (1851-1881)—

revolutionary Narodnik, of serf parents. One of the founders and leaders of the Narodnaya Volya. Organised attempts upon Alexander II's life. Delivered a programme speech at the trial in connection with the affair of March 1, 1881. p. 68

[121] *Perovskaya, Sofia Lvovna* (1853-1881)—revolutionary Narodnik. Member of the secret society Zemlya i Volya (Land and Freedom), member of the Executive Committee of the Narodnaya Volya. p. 68

[122] N. Chernyshevsky, *What Is to Be Done?, pp. 318, 319.* p. 71

[123] Quoted from *Alexander Ulyanov and the March 1, 1887 Case*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1927, p. 343 (in Russian). p. 72

[124] *Lenin on Literature and Art*, p. 649. p. 72

[125] *Repin, Ilya Yefimovich* (1844-1930)—Russian artist. Quoted from: Letopis (The Chronicle), 1916, No. 2, pp. 233-36. p. 76

[126] See: M. Ulyanova, *Lenin's Father*, pp. 15-16. p. 80

[127] See: V. I. Lenin, "What Is to Be Done?", *Collected Works*, Vol, 5. 1977, p. 393; *idem*, "Revolutionary Adventurism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, 1977, p. 187. p. 81

[128] See: V. I. Lenin, "What Is to Be Done?", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, 1977, p. 517. p. 81

[129] V. I. Lenin, "First All-Russia Congress on Adult Education", *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, 1977, p. 342. p. 82

[130] See *Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Biographical Chronicle*, Vol. 4, Moscow, 1973, p. 53 (in Russian). p. 83

[131] *The Kshesinskaya mansion*—a building in Leningrad, which was owned by ballerina Maria Kshesinskaya, a favourite of Tsar Nicholas II. p. 83

[132] V. I. Lenin, "Speech in the Finland Station

Square to Workers, Soldiers and Sailors, April 3(16), 1917", *Collected Works*, Vol. 41, 1971, p. 399. p. 83

[133] See Note 56. p. 83

[134] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, 1977, p. 98. p. 87

[135] Quoted from: A. Ivansky, *Young Lenin*, p. 21. p. 89

[136] *The Ulyanovs' Correspondence. 1883-1917*, Moscow, 1969, p. 35 (in Russian). p. 89

[137] V. I. Lenin, "To His Mother, February 7, 1898", *Collected Works*, Vol. 37, 1975, pp. 150-51. p. 90

[138] *The Ulyanovs' Correspondence. 1883-1917, p. 35.* p. 91

[139] Quoted from *Lenin and Simbirsk*, 2nd ed., Ulyanovsk, 1970, p. 329 (in Russian). p. 96

[140] *Karamzin, Nikolai Mikhailovich* (1766-1826)—Russian writer, the father of the sentimental trend in Russian literature, historian (author of *History of the Russian State* in 12 volumes). p. 97

[141] *Ogaryov, Nikolai Platonovich* (1813-1877)—Russian revolutionary, poet, journalist; close friend and contemporary of Alexander Herzen (see Note 53). p. 97

[142] From Ogaryov's verse "One's Majority" (1849). p. 98

[143] *Goncharov, Ivan Alexandrovich* (1812-1891)—Russian novelist, a past master of prose written in realist manner. In his novels he summarised essential features of Russian society in the 1840s-1860s. p. 99

[144] *Gogol, Nikolai Vasilyevich* (1809-1852)—Russian writer, author of *Dead Souls* (1842). p. 103

[145] *Khlestakov, the Mayor*—characters in Gogol's great comedy *The Government Inspector* (1836). p. 103

[146] Translated by Irina Zheleznova. See *Poetry of Europe*, in three volumes, Vol. III, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 207. p. 104

[147] N. F. Bunakov, *Selected Works on Education*, Moscow, 1953, p. 339 (in Russian). p. 104

[148] Quoted from *Known Throughout Russia*. Saratov, 1974, pp. 170-72 (in Russian). p. 105

[149] Quoted from: A. Ivansky, *Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov*, Moscow, 1963, p. 94 (in Russian). p. 106

[150] *Reminiscences of Ilya Ulyanov by His Contemporaries*, Saratov, 1968, pp. 71-72 (in Russian). p. 107

[151] *Ibid.*, pp. 117-18. p. 108

[152] *Ibid.*, p. 92. p. 108

[153] *Ibid.*, p. 104. p. 109

[154] *Ibid.*, p. 72. p. 110

[155] Quoted from: A. Ivansky, *Ilya Nikolayevich Ulyanov*, p. 95. p. 111

[156] *Ibid.*, pp. 141-42. p. 111

[157] See *Alexander Ulyanov and the March 1, 1887 Case*, pp. 41-42. p. 111

[158] *Reminiscences of Ilya Ulyanov by His Contemporaries*, p. 86. p. 111

[159] Quoted from *Known Throughout Russia* pp.170, 185. p. 112

[160] *Simbirskiye Gubernskiye Vedomosti*, January 25, 1886. p. 112

[161] *Ibid.*, April 11, 21, 25, 1870. p. 114

[162] See Note 143. p. 115

[163] See: N. K. Krupskaya, *About Lenin*, Moscow, 1960, p. 26 (in Russian). p. 115

[164] See *Vesthik Yevropy*, 1876, Vol, 2, p. 294. p. 121

[165] Quoted from: A. Alexeyev, A. Shver, *The Ulyanov Family in Simbirsk*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1925, p. 18 (in Russian). p. 123

[166] *Vestnik Yevropy*, 1876, Vol. 2, p. 295. p. 123

[167] Quoted from: V. Alexeyev, A. Shver, *op. cit.*, p. 19. p. 124

[168] *Lenin. October 1917*, in two volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1977, pp. 266-67 (in Russian). p. 125

[169] M. Ulyanova, *About Lenin*, Moscow, 1964, p. 63 (in Russian). p. 126

[170] V. I. Lenin, "Registration Form for Members of the Moscow Organisation of the R.C.P.(B.)", *Collected Works*, Vol. 42, 1971, p. 445. p. 130

[171] V. I. Lenin, "To His Sister Maria, December 24", *Collected Works*, Vol. 37, 1975, p. 70. p. 133

[172] *Alexander Ulyanov and the March 1, 1887 Case*, p. 49. p. 134

[173] *Recollections About Lenin*, in five volumes, Vol. 1, p. 184. p. 135

[174] *Ibid.*, p. 242. p. 136

[175] V. I. Lenin, "To His Mother and His Sister Anna, November 15, 1898", *Collected Works*, Vol. 37, 1975, p. 198. p. 136

[176] V. I. Lenin, "To His Mother and His Sister Anna, February 2, 1913", *Collected Works*, Vol. 37, p. 489. p. 136

[177] *The Bestuzhev Courses* in St. Petersburg—a higher educational institution for women in tsarist Russia named after the Russian historian Konstantin Bestuzhev-Ryumin who headed these courses (1878). p. 136

[178] Quoted from: A. Ivansky, *Young Lenin*, p. 112. p. 140

[179] See: N. K. Krupskaya, *About Lenin*, *op. cit.*, p. 83. p. 140

[180] Quoted from: M. Gorky, "V. I. Lenin", *Collected Works*, in ten volumes, Vol. 9, pp. 318-19. p. 141

[181] *Recollections About Lenin*, in five volumes, Vol.

3, Moscow, 1969, p. 184 (in Russian). p. 142

[182] *Ibid.*, p. 185. p. 143

[183] V. I. Lenin, "Preface to *Letters to Relatives* (1930 Edition)", *Collected Works*, Vol. 37, 1975, p. 28. p. 145

[184] V. I. Lenin, "To His Mother", *Collected Works*, Vol. 37, p. 66. p. 145

[185] Quoted from: A. Ivansky, *Young Lenin*, pp. 184-85. p. 147

[186] K. Korenev's verse. p. 147

[187] Quoted from *Puti Revolyutsii* (Paths of Revolution), Kazan, 1923, No. 3, p. 46 (in Russian). p. 149

[188] *Recollections About Lenin*, in five volumes, Vol. 1, p. 21. p. 150

[189] Quoted from: V. Alexeyev, A. Shver, *The Ulyanov Family in Simbirsk*, p. 51. p. 151

[190] *Ibid.* p. 153

[191] *Dostoyevsky, Fyodor Mikhailovich* (1821-1881)—Russian novelist, member of the Petrashevsky circle (see Note 196). In 1849, he was arrested and after being reprieved from death at the last moment was sent to the penal settlement at Omsk for four years. In 1859, he returned to St. Petersburg. The author of *The House of the Dead* (1861), *The Insulted and the Injured* (1862), *Crime and Punishment* (1866), *The Gambler* (1867), *The Idiot* (1868-69), among others. Remarkable for their profound psychological insight, his novels have greatly influenced Russian writers. p. 153

[192] F. M. Dostoyevsky, *Complete Works*, in 30 volumes, Vol. 11, Leningrad, 1974, p. 234 (in Russian). p. 153

[193] *Pisarev, Dmitri Ivanovich* (1840-1868)—Russian writer on social and political issues and literary critic; materialist philosopher, utopian socialist, and revolutionary democrat. He saw the country's

industrial development as a stepping-stone to socialism. He viewed the natural sciences as a means to enlightenment and as a productive force. He appraised highly Chernyshevsky's novel *What Is to Be Done?* and the works by Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky but mistakenly denied the importance of Alexander Pushkin's writings for his generation. p. 153

[194] Quoted from: A. Ivansky, *Young Lenin*, p. 112. p. 154

[195] A. N. Pleshcheyev, *Selected Verse*, Moscow, 1960, p. 78 (in Russian). p. 154

[196] The *Petrashevsky circle*—a society of progressive-minded commoner-intellectuals (in Russian *raznochintsy*, i.e., "men of different estates", drawn from the small townsfolk, the clergy, the merchant classes, the peasantry, as distinct from those drawn from the nobility) formed in St. Petersburg in the late 1844 around M. V. Butashevich-Petrashevsky (1821-1866), a Russian revolutionary and utopian socialist. Its members advocated a more democratic political order in Russia and the emancipation of peasants with allotments. The circle existed until the early 1849. p. 154

[197] *Pleshcheyev, Alexei Nikolayevich* (1825-1893)—Russian poet, an active member of the Petrashevsky circle, exiled to Orenburg (1849-1859). p. 154

[198] *Ryleyev, Kondraty Fyodorovich* (1795-1826)—Russian poet and Decembrist (see Note 56). Leader of the Decembrist revolt (December 14, 1825), after which he was executed. p. 154

[199] See Note 62. p. 154

[200] Translated by Irina Zheleznova. Quoted from: *Russian 19th-Century Verse*, pp. 296-97. p. 155

[201] V. G. Korolenko, "The Story About My Contemporary", *Collected Works*, in ten volumes, Vol.

7, Moscow, 1955, p. 197 (in Russian). p. 156

[202] M. Ulyanova, *Lenin's Father*, p. 50. p. 159

[203] Quoted from: *Known Throughout Russia*, p. 205. p. 159

[204] *Reminiscences of Ilya Ulyanov by His Contemporaries*, p. 124. p. 160

[205] M. Ulyanova, *Lenin's Father*, p. 58. p. 161

[206] V. I. Lenin, "To the Rural Poor", *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, 1977, p. 366. p. 162

[207] V. I. Lenin, "Review of Home Affairs", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, 1977, p. 281. p. 162

[208] V. I. Lenin, "The Question of Ministry of Education Policy", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, 1977, p. 146. p. 163

[209] V. I. Lenin, "On the Tasks of the People's Commissariat for Justice Under the New Economic Policy", *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, 1971, p. 562. p. 163

[210] Maxim Gorky, "V. I. Lenin", *op. cit.*, p. 279. p. 165

[211] *Lobachevsky, Nikolai Ivanovich* (1792-1856)—Russian mathematician, founder of non-Euclidean geometry. p. 165

[212] *Recollections About Lenin*, in five volumes, Vol. 4, Moscow, 1969, p. 387 (in Russian). p. 166

[213] V. I. Lenin, "The Second Congress of the Communist International", *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, 1977, p. 227. p. 166

[214] V. I. Lenin, "A Bold Assault and a Timid Defence", *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, 1972, p. 96. p. 167

[215] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 41, 5th Rus. ed., pp. 129, 133, 506. p. 172

[216] See Note 193. p. 174

[217] D. I. Pisarev, "Bazarov. Turgenev's Novel *Fathers and Sons*", *Literary Criticism*, in three volumes, Vol. 1, Leningrad, 1981, p. 234 (in Russian). p. 174

[218] *Ibid.*, p. 231. p. 176

[219] I. Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons. A Nest of the Gentry*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 62. p. 177

[220] M. Gorky, *Collected Works*, in 18 volumes, Vol. 18, 1963, p. 278 (in Russian). p. 177

[221] D. I. Pisarev, "Bazarov. Turgenev's Novel *Fathers and Sons*", *Works*, in four volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1955, p. 54 (in Russian). p. 178

[222] D. I. Pisarev, *Works*, in four volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1955 (in Russian). p. 178

[223] The words used by the British author Herbert George Wells (1866-1946) with reference to Lenin. Wells visited Russia twice: in 1920 and 1934. Wrote *Russia in the Shadows* (1920). p. 178

[224] Nekrasov's verse "The Poet and the Citizen" (1856). Translated by Peter Tempest. See *Poetry of Europe*, in three volumes, Vol. Three (1), Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 207. p. 180

[225] Nekrasov's verse "With every year, I feel my strength declining..." (1864). Translated by Alex Miller. See *Russian 19th-Century Verse*, p. 285. p. 181

[226] V. I. Lenin, "Questionnaire for Delegates of the Ninth All-Russia Conference of the R.C.P. (Bolsheviks)", *Collected Works*, Vol. 42, 1971, p. 451. p. 181

[227] V. I. Lenin, "Telegram to the Chairman of the Simbirsk Soviet", *Collected Works*, Vol. 44, 1975, p. 79 (footnote). p. 184

[228] V. I. Lenin, "On the Significance of Militant Materialism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, 1973, p. 230. p. 186

[229] V. I. Lenin, "All-Russia Census Form for Members of the R.C.P. (B.)", *Collected Works*, Vol. 42, 1971, p. 457. p. 186

[230] N. K. Krupskaya, *About Lenin*, Moscow, 1979, p. 71 (in Russian). p. 187

[231] *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34. p. 188

[232] Quoted from *Puti Revolyutsii*, Kazan, 1922, No. 2, pp. 5-6. p. 188

[233] *Zhukovsky, Vasily Andreyevich* (1783-1852)—Russian poet, one of the founders of romanticism in Russian literature. p. 188

[234] Quoted from *Puti Revolyutsii*, Kazan, 1922, No. 2, p. 6. p. 189

[235] N. A. Dobrolyubov, "Significance of Authority in Upbringing and Education", *Selected Works on Education*, Moscow, 1952, p. 137 (in Russian). p. 189

[236] *Iskry* (The Sparks)—a weekly satirical journal published in St. Petersburg from 1859 to 1873. p. 192

[237] N. K. Krupskaya, *About Lenin*, Moscow, 1979, p. 33 (in Russian). p. 193

[238] N. A. Dobrolyubov, "Significance of Authority in Upbringing and Education", p. 138. p. 193

[239] V. I. Lenin, "'The Peasant Reform' and the Proletarian-Peasant Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, 1974, p. 125. p. 194

[240] N. A. Dobrolyubov, *op. cit.*, p. 136. p. 195

[241] I. S. Turgenev, "Alexander III", *Collected Works*, in 30 volumes, Vol. 10, Moscow, 1982, pp. 285, 288 (in Russian). p. 205

[242] Quoted from *Members of the People's Will at the Tsarist Trial*, Moscow, 1930, p. 59 (in Russian). p. 207

[243] Quoted from *March 1, 1881 Case. Government Report*, St. Petersburg, 1906, pp. 291-92, 297 (in Russian). p. 209

[244] *Ibid.*, pp. 337, 343. p. 210

[245] *Ibid.*, p. 348. *V. N. Gerard*—Nikolai Kibalchich's

defence counsel. According to the resolution of the court, Kibalchich's project of an airship was put into an envelope, filed together with other documents pertaining to the affair of March 1, 1881 and handed into the Senate archives where it had been found after the October Revolution and published in the magazine *Byloye* (The Past). p. 211

[246] From Lev Tolstoy's letter to P. I. Biryukov dated March 3, 1906. See: L. N. Tolstoy, *Complete Works*, in 90 volumes, Vol. 63, Moscow-Leningrad, 1934, p. 55 (in Russian). p. 212

[247] *Ibid.* p. 213

[248] The Official Account didn't mention the fact that Mikhailov, as eyewitnesses testified, was hanged three times: the rope broke twice and he was executed only after he went up the scaffold for the third time. Without waiting for the executioner, Perovskaya herself pushed away the bench. p. 215

[249] V. I. Lenin, "Lecture on the 1905 Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, 1977, pp. 242-43. p. 218

[250] See Note 196. p. 218

[251] V. I. Lenin, "In Memory of Herzen", *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, 1973, p. 31. p. 218

[252] V. I. Lenin, "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, 1977, p. 55. p. 224

[253] V. I. Lenin, "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats", *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, 1977, p. 285. p. 229

[254] These are lines from the poem "Retribution" (1910-1921) by Russian and Soviet poet Alexander Blok (1880-1921). See: A. Blok, *Selected Poems*. Translated by Alex Miller, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1981, p. 291. p. 230

[255] From Saltykov-Shchedrin's letter to Nikolai Belogolovy, dated August 12 (24 New Style), 1881.

See: M. Ye. Saltykov-Shchedrin, *Collected Works*, in 20 volumes, Vol. 19 (2), Moscow, 1977, p. 26 (in Russian). p. 232

[256] Quoted from *Reminiscences of Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin by His Contemporaries*, Moscow, 1957, p. 372 (in Russian). p. 233

[257] From Saltykov-Shchedrin's letter to Nikolai Belogolovy, dated August 19 (31), 1881. Quoted from: M. Ye. Saltykov-Shchedrin, *Collected Works*, in 20 volumes, Vol. 20, Moscow, 1977, pp. 29-30 (in Russian). p. 235

[258] Quoted from *Reminiscences of Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin by His Contemporaries*, pp. 626, 627.p. 236

[259] *Leskov, Nikolai Semyonovich* (1831-1895)—Russian writer; many of his writings are distinguished for social satire. p. 236

[260] *Radishchev, Alexander Nikolayevich* (1749-1802)—Russian revolutionary, thinker and writer (his famous ode "Liberty", 1783). He wrote *A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow* (1790) which was followed by the writer's exile to Siberia. *Decembrists*, see Note 56. p. 245

[261] Quoted from *Alexander Ulyanov and the March 1, 1887 Case*, p. 72. p. 247

[262] These are the lines from N. Nekrasov's verse "I cannot breathe! No happiness, no purpose..." (1868). Translated by Alex Miller (*Russian 19th-Century Verse*, p. 295). p. 252

[263] V. I. Lenin, "The Position of the Bund in the Party", *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, 1961, p. 94. p. 253

[264] These are the lines from N. Nekrasov's verse "The Poet and the Citizen",(1856). p. 258

[265] *Katkov, Mikhail Nikiforovich* (1818-1887)—Russian journalist; since the early 1860s, an apologist of the government's reactionary policy. p. 265

[266] N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Mos-

cow, 1957, p. 12 (in Russian). p. 269

[267] The first line from Alexander Pushkin's poem *Ruslan and Ludmila* (1817-20); see *Ruslan and Ludmila*, Raduga Publishers, Moscow, 1987. p. 276

[268] These lines are from N. Nekrasov's verse "Mother" (1868). p. 276

[269] Quoted from *Recollections About Lenin*, in five volumes, Vol. 1, p. 612. p. 279

[270] See *Alexander Ulyanov and the March 1, 1887 Case*, pp. 94, 95. p. 282

[271] *Ibid.*, p. 98. p. 282

[272] Quoted from: N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1959, p. 15. p. 282

[273] *A Hunter's Sketches* (1847-52) by I. S. Turgenev–a collection of stories and sketches written in realist manner. p. 283

[274] V. I. Lenin, "In Memory of Count Heyden", *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, 1962, p. 53. p. 283

[275] A landowner in Moscow Gubernia notorious for her cruelty. She tortured to death more than a hundred serfs. p. 284

[276] V. I. Lenin, "In Memory of Count Heyden", *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, 1962, p. 56. p. 284

[277] The bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1905-07 in Russia. p. 285

[278] Quoted from *Puti Revolyutsii*, Kazan, 1922, No. 2, p. 7. p. 287

[279] January 9, 1905—the day when tsarist troops shooted a peaceful manifestation of workers in St. Petersburg who went with a petition to the tsar. It marked the beginning of the first Russian revolution. p. 290

[280] Quoted from *Alexander Ulyanov and the March 1, 1887 Case*, p. 357. p. 294

[281] *See Istorichesky Arkhiv*, 1960, No. 2, p. 203. p. 295

[282] *Plekhanov, Georgi Valentinovich* (1856-1918)—a prominent figure in the Russian and international Social-Democratic movement, disseminator of Marxism. Since 1875, a Narodnik (Populist), a leader of Zemlya i Volya (Land and Freedom), Chorny Peredel (General Distribution). In 1880, emigrated from Russia. Founder of the Marxist Emancipation of Labour group. After the Second Congress of the RSDLP (1903)—a Menshevik leader. In 1917, returned to Russia, supported the bourgeois Provisional Government (March 2 [15]-October 25 [November 7], 1917). Disapproved the 1917 October Revolution, but did not support counterrevolution. p. 296

[283] V. I. Lenin, "To the Citizens of Russia!", *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, 1964, p. 236. p. 301

[284] After the name of Nechayev (1847-1882)—participant in the revolutionary movement in Russia, organiser of the secret society Narodnaya Rasprava (The People's Summary Justice). In 1869 killed the student Ivanov in Moscow, suspecting him of betrayal. p. 304

[285] V. I. Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Communism—an Infantile Disorder", *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, 1977, pp. 25-26. p. 310

[286] V. I. Lenin, "Speech at the Unveiling of a Memorial Plaque to Those Who Fell in the October Revolution. November 7, 1918", *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 167. p. 311

[287] V. I. Lenin, "A Retrograde Trend in Russian Social-Democracy", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 278-79. p. 314

[288] G. V. Plekhanov, *Works*, 2nd ed., Vol. 3, Moscow-Leningrad, 1928, p. 259 (in Russian). p. ...

[289] *Potresov, Alexander Nikolayevich* (1869-1934)—

participant in the Russian revolutionary movement. Since 1903 a Menshevik leader. After the October Revolution, a white émigré. p. 348

[290] Quoted from *Recollections About Lenin*, p. 586. p. 348

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